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"Who is 'Jim the Penman?'"

Marie Monckton

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263, OXFORD STREET, W.

THE THEATRE.

A Monthly Review

OF

THE DRAMA, MUSIC, AND THE FINE ARTS

EDITED BY

CLEMENT SCOTT.

NEW SERIES.
VOL. VIII. JULY TO DECEMBER, 1886.

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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS.

Miss Cissy Grahame in "The Pick-pocket."
Lady Monckton in "Jim the Penman."
Mrs. Gilbert and Mr. James Lewis in "A Night Off."
Miss Henrietta Lindley in "Jim the Penman."
Miss Mary Moore.
Mr. Yorke Stephens in "On 'Change."
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ENGRAVINGS.

Mrs. Abington.
Samuel Foote.

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"THE ROAD TO RUIN," AT THE VAUDEVILLE THEATRE, 1886.

Mr. Charles Warner. Miss Kate Rorke Mr. Fuller Mellish. Mr Fred Thorne.
Miss Louisa Peach. Mr Thomas Thorne. Mr. James Fernandez.

From a Photograph specially taken for "The Theatre" by Barraud, 263, Oxford Street, W.

THE THEATRE.

First Appearances.

MRS. SIDDONS.

By Percy Fitzgerald.

It was in the year 1775 that Mrs. Siddons happened to be performing at Cheltenham, in a theatre that could be described as little better than a barn. She had been married only a few months to Mr. Siddons—a timorous creature, not to say grovelling, and quite overshadowed by the great woman who was his companion. One night it fell out that some persons of distinction were staying at Cheltenham—the Hon. Miss Boyle, afterwards Lady O'Neil, and her stepfather, Lord Bruce. Seeing "Venice Preserved" put up for performance, they were tempted to visit the place, in the hope, as they confessed later, of having a fine burlesque entertainment and a hearty laugh. To their astonishment they witnessed a powerful and affecting performance on the part of an unknown young actress of only nineteen, and found their tears falling abundantly. Next day they called upon her, and found her as modest and attractive as she was gifted. Lord Bruce, who was better known as Lord Aylesbury, when he returned to town mentioned this discovery to Mr. Garrick, of Drury Lane, though Dr. Hoadly had also drawn his attention to the obscure country actress.

Among Garrick's more intimate friends at this time was an extraordinary parson, named Bate, a bruising clergyman, who had figured in duels and "affrays at Vauxhall" and other places. Garrick, hearing that this gentleman—who was a sound critic, and a newspaper proprietor as well, also well experienced in theatrical matters—was about to visit Cheltenham, wrote to

him the following letter, in which he commissioned him to report upon the country performer :—

Mr. Garrick to Rev. Mr. Bate.

July 31, 1775.

Dear Bate,—If you pass by Cheltenham on your way to Worcester, I wish you would see an actress there—a Mrs. Siddons. She has a desire, I hear, to try her fortune with us. If she seems, in your eyes, worthy of being transplanted, pray desire to know upon what conditions she would make the trial, and I will write to her the post after I receive your letter. Pay our compliments to your lady and accept our warmest wishes, &c.

"A Mrs. Siddons!" The great actress would have smiled almost grimly had she ever seen this description after her later triumphs.

It will be noticed how carelessly and with what little hope of result the actor gave this commission. Nothing could have better suited the jovial parson, who within ten days found himself at the watering-place. His letter of report is written in a gay, exhilarating spirit, and is pleasant reading.

Rev. Mr. Bate to Mr. Garrick.

August 12, 1775.

My Dear Friend,—After combatting the various difficulties of one of the cursedest cross-roads in this kingdom, we arrived safe at Cheltenham on Thursday last, and saw the theatrical heroine of that place in the character of Rosalind. Though I beheld her from the sidewings of the stage (a barn about three yards over), and consequently under almost every disadvantage, I own she made so strong an impression on me, that I think she cannot fail to be a valuable acquisition to Drury Lane. Her figure must be remarkably fine when she is happily divested of a big ——, which entirely mars for the present her whole shape. Her face, if I may judge from whence I saw it, is one of the most beautiful for stage effect ever I beheld; but I shall surprise you when I shall assure you that these are nothing to her action and general stage deportment, which are remarkably pleasing and characteristic—in short, I know no woman who marks the different passages and transitions with so much variety, and, at the same time, propriety of expression. In the later humbug scene with Orlando, previous to her revealing herself, she did more with it than anyone I ever saw—not even your divine Mrs. Barry excepted. It is necessary after this panegyric to inform you that her voice struck me at first as rather dissonant, and I fancy, from the private conversation I had with her, that in unimpassioned scenes it must be somewhat grating. However, as I found it wear away as my business became more interesting, I am inclined to think it only an error of affectation, which may be corrected, if not totally removed. She told me she had been upon the stage from her cradle. This, though it

surprised me, gave me the highest opinion of her judgment, to find she had contracted no strolling habits, which have so often been the bane of many a theatrical genius. She will most certainly be of great use to you, at all events, on account of the great number of characters she plays, all of which, I venture to assert, she fills with propriety, though I have not seen her but in one. She is, as you have been informed, a very good breeches figure, and plays the Widow Brady, I am informed, admirably. I should not wonder, from her easy figure and manner, if she made *the proudest* of either house tremble in genteel tragedy; nay, beware yourself, great Little man, for she plays Hamlet to the satisfaction of the Worcestershire critics.

The moment the play was over, I wrote a note to her husband (who is a damn'd rascally player, though seemingly a very civil fellow), requesting an interview with him and his wife, intimating, at the same time, the nature of my business. You will not blame me for making this forced march in your favour, as I learned some of the Covent Garden Mohawks were entrenched near the place, and intended carrying her by surprise. At the conclusion of the farce, they waited on me, and, after I had opened my commission, she expressed herself happy at the opportunity of being brought under your eye, but declined proposing any terms, leaving it entirely to you to reward her as you think proper.

You will perceive that at present she has all that diffidence, usually the first attendant upon merit. How soon the force of Drury Lane examples, added to the rising vanity of a stage heroine, may transform her, I cannot say. It happens, very luckily, that the company comes to Worcester for the race week, when I shall take every opportunity of seeing her, and if I find the least reason to alter my opinion (perhaps too hastily formed), you shall immediately have my recantation. My wife, of whose judgment in theatrical matters I have a high opinion, joins with me in these sentiments respecting her merit. I should have wrote to you before, but no post went out from any place near here but this night's. I shall expect to hear from you by return of the post, as Siddons will call upon me to know whether you look upon her as engaged. My wife joins me in respect to Mrs. Garrick and yourself.

I remain, my dear sir,

(after writing a damned jargon, I suppose, of unintelligible stuff)

In haste,

Ever yours most truly.

Post direct to me to the Hop Pole.

This is all vivid enough, suggesting the scene in Nickleby, when the London manager was known to be in the boxes. The figures are touched in with much graphic power, the least effective being the sketch of the poor humble Siddons, who is wishing to go any terms.

Garrick was greatly pleased with this full and satisfactory

report; but there was a reason founded on his peculiarly sensitive nature that made this news openly welcome to him, and was really a patent feature in the engagement that followed. It is well known how harassed he was by his own ladies—the Abingtons, Yates, Younges, and others. He felt an inexpressible satisfaction in the idea that if he discovered a new and brilliant star he would have the satisfaction of putting them down and filling them with mortification. This must be borne in mind, as it will be found to help in understanding the failure that followed. He, indeed, reveals his purpose in his letter of reply to Bate.

Mr. Garrick to Mr. Bate.

August 15, 1775.

Dear Bate,—Ten thousand thanks for your very clear, agreeable, friendly letter. It pleased me much, and whoever calls it a jargon *of unintelligible stuff* should be knocked down if I were near him. I must desire you to secure the lady with my best compliments, and that she may depend upon any reasonable and friendly encouragement in my power; at the same time, you must intimate to the husband that he must be satisfied with *the state of life in which it has pleased Heaven to call her*. You see how much I think myself obliged to your kind offices by the flattering quotation I make from your *own book*. Your account of the big —— alarms me. When shall we be in shape again? How long does the lady count? When will she be able to appear? I may complete your good offices, and let me know all we are to trust to. Should not you get some memorandum signed by her and her husband, and of which I will send a *fac simile* copy to them?

I laughed at the military stratagems of the Covent Garden generals, whilst I had you genius to oppose them. *If she has merit, as I am told by your letter she must have, and will be wholly governed by me, I will make her theatrical fortune. If any lady begins to play us tricks, I will immediately play off my masked battery of Siddons against her.* I should be glad to know her cast of parts, or, rather, what parts she has done, and in which she likes herself best—these I would have marked—and, above all, my dear Bate, let me know about what time she may reckon to lie in, that we may reckon accordingly upon her appearance in Drury Lane. I report this to you as it is of the utmost consequence.

Rev. Mr. Bate to Mr. Garrick.

Worcester, Aug. 19, 1779.

My Dear Friend,—I received your very friendly letter, and take the first post from hence to answer it. I found it unnecessary to make the intimation you desired to the husband, since he requires only to be employed in any manner you think proper, and as he is much more tolerable than I thought him at first, it may

be no very difficult manner to station him so as to satisfy the man without burdening the property. I saw him the other evening in Young Marlow in Goldsmith's Comedy, and then he was far from despicable, neither his figure nor face contemptible. A jealousy prevailing through the theatre upon a suspicion of thus leaving them, the acting-manager seems determined that I shall not see her again in any character, when she might give me a second display of her theatrical powers. I am resolved, however, to continue the siege till they give her something capital, knowing that must speedily be the case, or the garrison must fall by famine.

Now, for the Big B——. Pretty early in December she will be fit for service; as you certainly mean to open the ensuing campaign by charging in person at the head of your lines, I conceive she will come at a very favourable crisis to take a second command when your retreat from the field may be politically necessary. I am strongly for her first appearance as Rosalind; but may judge better, perhaps, after a perusal of the list on the other side. The characters marked under are those which she prefers to others.

Jane Shore.	Juliet.	*Rosalind.*
Alicia.	Cordelia.	Mrs. Strickland.
Roxana.	Horatio.	Clarida.
Grecian's Daughter.	Marianne.	Miss Aubrey.
Matilda.	*Lady Townley.*	Charlotte.
Calista.	*Portia.*	*Widow Brady.*
Nominia.	Mrs. Belville.	Imogene.
Belvedere.	Violante.	

You are certainly right respecting a memorandam between you. The moment, therefore, I receive one from you it shall be conveyed to them at Cheltenham, when they return next week, and they have promised to return me an answer immediately at Birmingham, for which place I shall be off the instant I have received your letter on my way to town. In order to conclude this business finally, and to the satisfaction of all parties, I am desired to request your answers to the following particulars:—

1. As they are ready to attend your summons at any time, whether they are not to be allowed something to subsist upon when they come to town previous to their appearance.

2. Whether you have any objection to employ them in any situation in which you may think them likely to be useful.

3. When you desire they should attend you.

As to the first, without you are inclined to have them at the opening of the house, perhaps her remaining in the country in their own company, where they do very well, may ease you of some expense, but of that you must be the best judge. With respect to him, I think you can have no objection to take him upon the terms he proposes himself. I forgot to tell you that Mrs. Siddons is about twenty years of age. It would be unjust not to remark one circumstance in favour of them both; I mean the universal good character they have preserved here for many years, on account of their public as well as private conduct in life. I beg

you to be very particular in your answer to the three queries, and likewise expressly to mention the time you wish to see them, that they may arrange their little matters accordingly. This, I hope, will enable me to effect everything you would expect from me when you honoured me with the commission, and if, in the discharge of it, I have been able to render you the least service I shall reflect upon it as one of the most flattering circumstances of my life. Mrs. Bate joins me, &c.

N.B.—She is the most extraordinary quick study I ever heard of. This cannot be amiss, for if I recollect right, we have a sufficient number of the leaden-headed ones in Drury Lane already.

It will be seen that in this long list of characters—wonderful in so young a creature—she modestly considered herself strong in only seven. Widow Brady and the Grecian Daughter thus put together must have made the manager smile.

The parson thus stimulated, and, at the same time, gratified by their praises (and he was, indeed, performing a congenial duty), now began to follow up his commission with something like enthusiasm. In a few days he reported further progress.

Nearly a month, however, passed before anything was concluded finally. The poor, nervous Siddons grew alarmed and wrote piteously to his friend, who had left the place. Their situation was critical.

Mr. Siddons to Rev. Mr. Bate.

Cheltenham, Sept. 4, 1775.

Rev. Sir,—Yours came safe to hand this morning. I confess I was under some concern not hearing from you sooner, for from the time you showed me Mr. Garrick's letter at Worcester I had nearly assured myself of Mrs. Siddons' engagement, on which, on my return to Worcester, I gave my partners in management notice of my intention to part from them; and if anything had happened that we could not have been engaged it would have proved a very unlucky circumstance. However, Sir, your letter hath removed the apprehensions I was under, and set me right again.

I am very agreeable Mrs. Siddons can continue here at Gloucester till she is able to remove to London. Meantime hope to be favoured in your correspondence with any advice you shall please to offer or instructions Mr. Garrick shall be pleased to send me. Be so good, Sir, as to present my most respectful compliments to him, and assure him he has conferred an eternal obligation on me by his kind offer of the cash, but hope I shall not have occasion to trouble him for. For the pains you have taken and the services done me I shall ever retain the most grateful sense, and am, with Mrs. Siddons' respects,

Your very humble Servant,

Wm. Siddons.

The situation of the young actress was particularly unfortunate, and the delay—absolutely necessary as it was—was the more embarrassing from its uncertainty. The unhappy Siddons was, however, relieved in an unexpected way, and he ventured to write direct to the great man himself to tell him the joyful news that the period of suspense was at an end.

To Mr. D. Garrick.

Gloucester, Nov. 9, 1775.

Dear Sir,—From my former accounts of Mrs. Siddons, you'll be surprised when I tell you she was unexpectedly taken ill when performing on the stage, and early the next morning produced me a fine girl. They are both likely to do well. But I am afraid, sir, notwithstanding this, I shan't be able to leave this week sooner than the time I last mentioned; for Mrs. Siddons counting so much longer, I had fixed the conclusion of our particular private concerns till that time. I hope this will make no difference with you; if so, I would endeavour to hasten my business; if not, I shall have time to conclude it with satisfaction to think Mrs. Siddons will be somewhat better to take the journey.

I am, sir.

P.S.—I have just had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Dinwoody, whom you commissioned to supply me with the cash. He tells me I might have any sum I had occasion for, so have made bold to take £20—which I hope will meet with your approbation.

In about six weeks the young actress was recovered, and by Christmas was in London at Drury Lane, about to make her *début*. The terms they had accepted were of the most modest kind—three pounds a week for the lady, and for himself two. At least, so we gather from a letter of the husband's.

An interesting speculation has always been what was the cause of Mrs. Siddons' failure. She herself laid it on Garrick, and accused him of "keeping her back." The real reasons, however, were two—first, her situations in the theatre, where all the leading characters were in possession of the most capable actresses, and who were already filled with jealousy; secondly, her own foolish delusion that she was a comedy actress, and as such clearly impressed Mr. Bate, who saw her in "As You Like It"—a performer who could take pride in doing the Widow Brady—and Nell in "The Devil to Pay," could hardly have nourished the pure spirit of tragedy. This latter is the real reason, for Portia, played with grace and spirit, it need not be said, would be effective as a trial part. She was, moreover, too

young and too slight, and wanted weight for the great characters. A trial part, however, is a sure evidence of belief in one's powers, and the choice of so airy a comedy part as Portia proves this. As to Garrick's share in "keeping her back," he seems to have been warranted by her failure in this part. But a farce by the Rev. Mr. Bate, the agent who had engaged her, called "The Blackamoor Washed White," was now produced, and she was given a part in it. This unlucky production was the cause of a frightful riot; the fighting clergyman appeared in the boxes, and seemed to defy or challenge the audience. The poor actress shared in the disgrace, and it is said the author laid the blame of failure upon the *protégé* he had so recommended, attacking her in his newspaper. During his last performances before his retirement Mr. Garrick brought her more forward. She was privileged to play Lady Anne to his Richard, with also Mrs. Sullen. All this shows that she had only a respectable position in the company. The name of the poor, abject Siddons, enjoying his £2 a week, does not appear at all. He probably "carried a banner," or, perhaps, played a small part under a different name.

The night of this *début* was December 29, 1775, when she appeared as Portia before an audience described as "numerous and splendid." The bill ran :—

DRURY LANE.

By His Majesty's Company,

AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN DRURY LANE,

THIS DAY will be presented

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Shylock, by Mr. KING ;
Bassanio, by Mr. BENNLEY ;
Antonio, by Mr. REDDISH ;
Gobbo, by Mr. PARSONS ;
Lorenzo (with songs), by Mr. VERNON ;
Launcelot, by Mr. WRIGHTEN ;
Duke, by Mr. HURST ;
Tubal, by Mr. MESSINK ;
Gratiano, by Mr. DODD ;
Salanio, by Mr. FAWCETT ;
Salarino, by Mr. J. AICKEN ;
Jessica, (with song) by Miss JARRATT ;
Nerissa, by Mrs. DAVIES ;
Lady, by Mrs. KING ;
Portia by A YOUNG GENTLEWOMAN,
(Being her First Appearance) ;

To which will be added, for the fourth time these six years, a dramtic entertainment (in two parts) of singing, dancing, and dialogue, in honour of Shakespeare, called

THE JUBILEE.

The Principal Characters by
Mr. VERNON,
Mr. Moody, Mr. Naldon, Mr. Kear, Mr. Usher, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Davies, Mr. Fossett,
Mark Blanland, Mr. BANNISTER;
Mr. Love, Mrs. Bradshaw, Mrs. Davies, and Mr. WRIGHTEN.
The dances by Signor Giorgi, Signor Como, Signora Crespi, and Mrs. Sutton.
In which will be introduced
A PAGEANT WITH ADDITIONS.

Boxes, 5s.; Pit, 3s.; First Gallery, 2s.; Upper Gallery, 1s.
The doors will be opened at five o'clock. Places for the boxes to be had of Mr. Fosbrook, at the Stage-door.

Nothing could have been more unfortunate than the incidents of this *début*. Overcome with nervousness, she was observed to totter on, rather than walk. She appeared to be frail and delicate, having only just recovered; her words were often inaudible, her voice dropping into an inaudible whisper at the close of the sentence; her eyes wandered round idly; while even her dress was ugly—a faded salmon-coloured sask-back. In the "quality of mercy" speech she did better, delivering it with only "elocutionary propriety." It was, in short, a failure. The *Gazetteer* said it was a mediocre performance, and there was a vulgarity in her tones. She was unsuited for the great line in which she had been held forth. She had, indeed, a good stage expressive feature, and spoke with propriety, but her voice had little variety or feeling—she lacked fire and spirit; nothing was so barren of fame or profit *as a cold correctness*. Even her friend and discoverer (Bate) would say little except deplore her over-nervousness, and declare it was one of the most *respectable* (awkward word!) first essays he had ever seen. He praised, however, her beauty, figure, and gesture, and her forte seemed to be the enforcing the meaning of the author by an emphatic though easy art peculiar to herself; her voice at times was *rather low*.

The actress never forgot this humiliation, and laid it all on Garrick. She had thought him not only her friend, but her oracle, and in consequence of his advice Portia was selected. Later she accused him of hindering her exertions; she was not "to overshadow the tip of his nose." Yet he gave her many chances—Lady Anne, pronounced "lamentable" by the Press—

the truth being that a mistake had been made in choosing comedy parts. She, therefore, may be said not to have strictly made her *début* at all until some years later, when she appeared as a real tragedy queen, and took the town by storm.

After the season was over she went to the country, believing herself secure of re-engagement. Garrick, retiring from his theatre, promised to mention her to the new management. But they were filled with misgivings at this change, which reached them in the country, and the husband addressed Mr. Garrick in this lowly and obsequious strain :—

Mr. Siddons to Mr. Garrick.

Dear Sir,—I make bold to trouble you with an epistle in which I have presumed to solicit your friendship and endeavours for our continuance in Drury Lane. I admit we have been doubly unfortunate at our onset at the theatre. First, that particular circumstances prevented our joining it at a proper time, and thereby rendered it impossible for us to be mingled in the business of the season when our utility might have been more observed; second, that we are going to be deprived of you as a manager, and left to those who may not have an opportunity this winter of observing us at all. These considerations, sir, have occasioned this address, with hopes that you will lay them before Mr. Sheridan and the gentlemen, your successors; and, as there has been no agreement with regard to salary between you and us, it may here be necessary to propose that article, thereby to acquaint them with what we shall expect, which (as we are so young in the theatre) is, I think, no more than what we may decently subsist on, and appear with some credit to the profession. That is, for Mrs. Siddons three pounds a week, for myself two; and this, I flatter myself, we shall both be found worthy of for the first year, after that (as it may be presumed we shall be more experienced in our business) shall wish to rise as our merits may demand. I am, sir, with many apologies for this freedom,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

Wm. Siddons.

Saturday morning, Feb. 9, 1776.

Three pounds a week, just half what she had been receiving, was surely evidence of the extremities to which the pair held themselves reduced. The actress indeed spoke of her "disgrace" at Drury Lane. Suddenly, however, they received a curt and formal announcement from the new management that their services would not be required. This blow, as Mrs. Siddons said, "nearly killed her." The disgrace of dismissal, as it seemed, appeared to bring ruin to her and her babes. She always accused Garrick of a breach of faith, saying that he depreciated her—at least Mr. Sheri-

dan told her so. But it may be doubted. She, however, bravely rallied and returned to her dull provincial round, under very mortifying conditions, and for seven years worked hard, and steadily rose in reputation. She thus lived down that rebuff. It was Sheridan (Sheridan *père*) who chanced to see her at a country theatre, and was so struck with her playing that he strongly urged her engagement. She showed no eagerness to go to town; though, indeed, "after my former dismissal," she said, "this was a triumphal moment." Henderson had also seen and reported favourably of her. Sheridan, having faith in the venture, filled the papers with preparatory "puffs," and the news of the engagement of the star was reiterated at the foot of the bill for weeks previously. The night of October 10, 1782, was chosen for this second probation, more perilous and even terrible from the original failure. Two days before she was seized with a nervous hoarseness, and it seemed likely that a postponement would have to be taken. But on the morning of the performance her voice was most happily restored. "On this eventful day," she writes, "my father arrived to comfort me and be a witness of *my trial*. He accompanied me to my dressing-room at the theatre. There he left me, and I, in one of what *I call* my desperate tranquillities, which usually impress me under terrific circumstances, completed my dress, to the astonishment of my attendants, without uttering one word, though often sighing most profoundly." How natural is this, yet it only described what depended on the awful crisis, for failure was now failure in all and for the future. Here was the bill on which those fine eyes must have rested with a dulled terror:—

DRURY LANE.

NOT ACTED these FOUR years.
By HIS MAJESTY'S COMPANY,
At the THEATRE ROYAL, in DRURY LANE,
THIS EVENING will be presented,
ISABELLA;
or, THE FATAL MARRIAGE.
Biron, by Mr. SMITH;
Count Baldwin, by Mr. PACKER;
Carlos, by Mr. FARREN;
Belford, by Mr. R. PALMER;
Sampson, by Mr. WRIGHTEN;
and Villeray, by Mr. PALMER;
Nurse, by Mrs. LOVE;
and Isabella, by Mrs. SIDDONS

(From the Theatre Royal, Bath).
In Act III. an EPITHALAMIUM,
with singing by Miss COLLETT and Miss WRIGHT.
To which will be added
A TRIP TO SCOTLAND.
Griskin, by Mr. PARSONS;
Cupid (with a song in character), by Miss FIELD;
Southerton, Mr. NORRIS; Chamberlain, Mr. BURTON;
Jemmy Twinkle, Mr. LAMASH;
Fillagree, Mrs. HOPKINS;
Landlady, Miss LOVE;
Chambermaid, Miss SIMSON;
Miss Flock, Miss WRIGHT;
Miss Griskin, Mrs. BRERETON,
with a POSTILLION DANCE incidental to the piece.
Boxes, 5s.; Pit, 3s.; Gallery, 2s.; Up. Gallery, 1s.
Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. Fosbrook at the stage door.
The doors to be opened at half after five o'clock.
To begin exactly at half after six.
VIVANT REX ET REGINA.

The revived comedy of "The Gamester," which was so favourably received on Saturday last week, will be performed early in the next week. A new after-piece, called "Too Civil by Half," is getting forward with all possible expedition.

The large theatre was crammed--critics, amateurs, all were there in serried rows. As she stepped on the scene she felt unnerved. "The awful consciousness," as she said in her natural way, "that one is the sole object of attention in that vast space, lined, as it were, with human intellect from top to bottom and all around. It may be imagined, but can never be described, and *by me can never be forgotten.*"

"Isabella" is a play of "tumultuous passions," a crescendo of horrors and violent emotion, and nothing could have been better selected to exhibit the powers of the candidate. The tenderness of her tones went to all hearts; the agony of her suffering thrilled the house. Many men were seen in tears; some women fell into hysterics. In the last act every speech was interrupted by bursts of applause. As the great fold of the sombre green curtain fell, it was felt that a genuine triumph had been achieved. "I never in my life heard such peals of applause," she wrote. "I thought they would not have suffered Mr. Packer to end the play." The exquisite enjoyment of assured triumph, after peril passed, is happily described by her. We envy the delicious feeling. "I was half dead," she says, "and my joy and thankfulness were of too overflowing and solemn a nature to admit of words, or even tears. My father, my husband, and myself sat down to a frugal supper in a silence uninterrupted, except by exclamations of glad-

ness from Mr. Siddons. My father enjoyed his refreshments, but ominously stopped short, and laying down his knife and fork, lifting up his venerable face, and throwing back his silver hair, gave way to tears of happiness. We soon parted for the night, and I, worn out with continual broken rest and laborious exertions, after an hour's retrospection (who can conceive the intenseness of that reverie ?), fell into a sweet and profound sleep, which lasted till the middle of next day." A happy, most natural, well-conceived analysis.

Brighton Pier.

A Song.

A tiny man, and a tinier maid,
They only differed by half a year,
She with a bucket, and he with a spade,
Made love, one morn, upon Brighton Pier.
As the following waves to the shingle raced,
And the seagulls dipped to the breeze in play,
A small arm stole round a smaller waist,
And he whispered, "Marry me, love, some day.'

A lovely woman, an earnest man,
With never a thought about fate or fear,
Clasp'd hands in love, as the breakers ran
And the sea foam scattered on Brighton Pier !
Ah ! Life, if it only would last like this,
If love would never turn old and grey,
Then earth were heav'n, and the future bliss,
And eyes would not turn to the sad "Some day !"

A little old man, and a wife as well,
Sat side by side in the starlight clear,
And they heard the chime of the "passing bell"
As they doz'd and dream'd upon Brighton Pier.
Then he said as he looked in her faithful eyes
And tenderly touched the hair grown grey,
" 'Twill be lonely, dear, when one of us dies,
But you'll pray we may meet and not part 'some day.' "

June, 1886. C. S.

Frances Abington.

By Austin Brereton.

A LITTLE less than a century and a half ago a bright little girl was daily to be seen selling flowers in the Mall of St. James's Park. Popularly known as "Nosegay Fan," the child did her best to help in the support of her poor home, shared by her father, once a private soldier in the King's Guards, and then a cobbler in Windmill Street, and afterwards in Vinegar Yard, Drury Lane, and her brother, who watered the horses of the Hampstead stage in Hanway Yard, Tottenham Court Road. Thence she rose to the dignity of reciting at the Bedford or Shakespeare in Covent Garden whenever she could persuade a waiter to introduce her to the company assembled in those taverns. From spouting Shakespeare and other authors from a table in the Covent Garden Piazza she became a servant to a French milliner in Cockspur Street, acquiring thereby a taste for dress, afterwards of great service to her, and an acquaintance with the French tongue. Thence the girl passed to the kitchen over which Robert Baddeley—then not dreaming of the cake which he was later on to bequeath to Drury Lane Theatre—presided, and—to something worse. The girl was Frances Barton, born in 1731, one of the first comic actresses of our stage, and the original Lady Teazle. Her common origin and the penury, lowness, and misery of her early life excuse her frailty, and, though none too virtuous at first, the "Nosegay Fan" of later life was an estimable, benevolent woman.

The stage career of Fanny Barton commenced in 1755 on Theophilus Cibber obtaining permission to present a certain number of performances at the Haymarket Theatre. On August 21 of that year was announced the comedy of "The Busybody," the part of Miranda by Miss Barton, "being her first essay." Miranda was rapidly followed by Miss Jenny in "The Provoked Husband," Kitty Pry in "The Lying Valet," Sylvia in "The Recruiting Officer," Prince Prettyman in "The Rehearsal," and

MRS. ABINGTON.

Mrs. Tattoo in "Lethe." From the Haymarket, Miss Barton went to Bath, and during the summer following she played at Richmond, where she was seen by one of the patentees of Drury Lane Theatre, who engaged her forthwith. She accordingly opened at Drury in November, 1756, appearing as Lady Pliant in Congreve's comedy, "The Double Dealer." Advancement at Drury Lane was difficult—indeed, well-nigh impossible, for the beginner who had to contend, on the one hand, with Mrs. Pritchard in tragedy, and, on the other, with Mrs. Clive in comedy. So an engagement in Dublin, more advantageous in every way to the actress, being offered, was promptly accepted, and the actress crossed to the Irish capital. But at this period she was Miss Barton no more, for she had married her music-master, Mr. Abington, one of the trumpeters in the Royal service. Nothing very precise is known of this same Abington, beyond the fact that he was a smart-looking little man, of a lively wit, and not very attentive to his duties as a husband. It is not, therefore, much to be wondered at that the flower-girl of early days should have sought consolation with one Mr. Needham, a member of the Irish Parliament, to whom she was so faithful that he left her an annuity. Mr. Abington was content to wink at the connection in consideration of a yearly sum of money allowed him by his wife, who survived him many years.

Mrs. Abington's first appearance in Dublin was made at the Smock Alley Theatre on December 11, 1759, when she played Mrs. Sullen in "The Beaux' Stratagem." Her next part here, and one in which she was admirably suited, was Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing." This was succeeded by Corinna, Clarinda, Flora, and Violante, Lady Fanciful, Leanthe, Maria in "The Non-Juror," Second Constantia, and the Fine Lady in "Lethe." Her comic genius rapidly asserted itself, and before the season had ended she established herself as one of the first and most promising actresses on the Irish stage. At Smock Alley Mrs. Abington had the advantage of acting with Tate Wilkinson in "High Life Below Stairs," in which she made a great success as Kitty. The hit made by her in this part is thus described by Tate Wilkinson: "The whole circle was in surprise and rapture, each asking the other how such a treasure could possibly have been in Dublin, and in a state of obscurity; such a jewel was invaluable, and their own tastes and

judgments, they feared, would justly be called in question if this daughter of Thalia was not immediately taken by the hand and distinguished as her certain and distinguished merit demanded." So successful was the farce that it was repeated a dozen times during the season. Mrs. Abington's success on the stage was now assured, and so nice was her taste in dress that the "Abington cap" was the rage among the Dublin ladies.

Mrs. Abington was engaged the following season for the Crow Street Theatre, the great rival to Smock Alley, and she opened there on May 22, 1760, acting Lady Townley, and Lucinda in "The Englishman in Paris. The night chosen for her entrance at Crow Street was also appointed for her benefit, and so greatly was she patronised that it was found necessary to convert part of the pit into seats corresponding to our modern stalls. Her "Virgin Unmasked" in "Oroonoko" and her Lucy in "The Beggar's Opera" also brought her fame. It is worthy of note that Mrs. Abington had for companions in the Crow Street company Woodward, Fleetwood, Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson (the first Jefferson), and Mr. Dancer. To the harlequin of Woodward, Mrs. Abington appeared as Columbine in the pantomine of "Queen Mab." Her Chloe in "The Lottery" and her Polly Honeycombe in Coleman's farce of that name displayed her comic powers uncommonly well. Arthur Murphy's comedy, "The Way to Keep Him," was first performed in Dublin, at Crow Street, in February, 1761, when Mrs. Abington rose still further in public estimation by her easy, elegant portrayal of the Widow Belmour. In the following autumn Mrs. Abington returned, under the management of Mossop, to Smock Alley, where she remained until the next year, when she was engaged by Garrick for Drury Lane.

Her re-appearance at Drury Lane was made in the character of the Widow Belmour. She remained there, in undisturbed posession of the chief comic parts, for twenty years. There she performed Lady Fanciful in "The Provoked Wife," Araminta in "The School for Lovers," Belinda in "All in the Wrong," Polly Peachum, Miss Prue, Lady Betty Modish, Lady Townley, and Millamont. She was also the original representative of Lady Alton in "The English Merchant," Charlotte in "The Hypocrite," Miss Rusport in "The West Indian," Lady Bab Lardoon in "The Maid of the Oaks," Roxalana in "The Sultan," Miss Hoyden in "A Trip to Scarborough," and Lady Teazle. Her Shakspearean characters were

Portia, Rosalind, Ophelia, Desdemona, Olivia, and Beatrice. She excelled in the latter part particularly, but her Ophelia, which she played to Garrick's Hamlet, appeared, to a critical spectator, "like a mackerel on a gravel walk." She remained at Drury Lane until 1782, when she went over to Covent Garden. There she stayed until 1790, and she was absent from the stage until the season of 1797-1798, when she resumed her position at Covent Garden. Her last appearance on the public stage was made there on April 12, 1799, when she acted Lady Racket in "Three Weeks After Marriage," for the benefit of Alexander Pope, portrait-painter and player. The last time, however, that she acted was on May 31 of the same year, when she played Lady Fanciful at Brandenburgh House, the residence of the Margravine Anspach, who acted Lady Brute. From that time until her death, in 1815, she retired from public life, and busied herself in quietly doing good to her fellow creatures.

Thomas Davies, a contemporary of the actress, judged her person to be elegant, her address graceful, and her looks animated and expressive. "To the goodness of her understanding," he also wrote, "and the superiority of her taste she is indebted principally for the power of pleasing. The tones of her voice are not naturally charming to the ear, but her incomparable skill in modulation renders them perfectly agreeable. Her articulation is even so exact that every syllable she utters is conveyed distinctly and even harmoniously." According to Charles Dibdin, there came with Mrs. Abington "a species of excellence which the stage seems never before to have boasted in the same perfection. The higher parts in comedy had been performed chastely and truly; perhaps in these particulars more so than by this actress. There was a peculiar goodness gleamed across the levity of Mrs. Pritchard, and, by what one can learn of Mrs. Bracegirdle, who seems to have possessed the same sort of captivating manners which distinguished Mrs. Abington, she was in these characters natural and winning. But it remained for her successor to add a degree of grace, fashion, and accomplishment to sprightliness which was no sooner seen than it was imitated in the politest circles. In addition to the grace, the ease, and the elegance with which Mrs. Abington impersonated characters in high life and aped politeness in chambermaids, her taste for dress was novel and interesting." In the dexterous management of a fan no one could compare with her.

Garrick was exceedingly ungenerous towards Mrs. Abington. He did much to annoy her, and his published correspondence contains many caustic letters addressed by him to her. "She is below the thought of any honest man or woman," he said; "she is as silly and as false as she is treacherous." Yet Mrs. Abington forgave his sneers, and was never tired of praising his genius. Of his eyes she said that whatever expression they assumed they seemed to operate by fascination; in all her intercourse with the world she had never beheld eyes with such wonderful expression, brilliancy, and force. She thought that Shakespeare was made for Garrick, and Garrick for Shakespeare. "I do impartial justice to your merit," Horace Walpole wrote to her in 1775, "and fairly allow it equal to any actress I have seen, but believe the present age will not be in the wrong if they hereafter prefer it to those they may live to see." A life-like glimpse of her in her retirement is given in Henry Crabb Robinson's "Reminiscences," under date of June 16, 1811: "Dined at Sergeant Rough's, and met the once celebrated Mrs. Abington. From her present appearance we can hardly suppose she could ever have been otherwise than plain. She herself laughed at her snub-nose; but she is erect, has a large, blue, expressive eye, and an agreeable voice. She spoke of her retirement from the stage as occasioned by the vexations of a theatrical life. She said she should have gone mad if she had not quitted her profession. She has lost all her professional feelings, and when she goes to the theatre can laugh and cry like a child; but the trouble is too great, and she does not often go. . . . Mrs. Abington would not have led me to suppose that she had been on the stage by either the manner or the substance of her conversation. She speaks with the ease of a person used to good society rather than with the assurance of one whose business it was to imitate that ease."

She once made the mistake of playing Scrub in "The Beaux' Stratagem" with her hair dressed for Lady Racket, a character which she acted after Scrub on the same evening. This ill-advised venture was made on the occasion of her benefit. It naturally brought much ridicule upon her. Grotesque portraits of her in this character were made at the time, and are still to be met with in old print shops. The performance was thus alluded to by Peter Pindar:—

"The courtly Abington's untoward star
Wanted her reputation much to mar,
And sink the lady to the washing-tub—
So whisper'd, 'Mistress Abington, play Scrub.'
To folly full as great some imp may lug her,
And bid her slink in Fitch and Abel Drugger."

Dr. Johnson, who seems to have had a great admiration for Mrs. Abington's abilities, was solicited by her to attend her benefit. He did so. Boswell's inquisitive nature asserted itself. "Why, sir," he asked, "did you go to Mrs. Abington's benefit? Did you see?" "No, sir." "Did you hear?" "No, sir." "Why, then, sir, did you go?" "Because, sir, she is a favourite with the public; and when the public cares a thousandth part for you that it does for her, I will go to *your* benefit, too."

Mrs. Abington at one time kept a mansion in Clarges Street, Piccadilly, and, in 1807, she writes to Mrs. Jordan of her happiness in her two rooms at 19, Grosvenor Place, Eaton Square. She lived during her last years in Pall Mall, and there she died on March 4, 1815, aged eighty-three years. She was buried at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, where no monument marks her grave, and where there does not even appear to be a tablet to the memory of this gifted actress and benevolent woman. Sir Joshua Reynolds painted a full-length portrait of her, and a picture of her is in the Garrick Club. The engraving illustrating this memoir represents her in the character of Rosalind.

Hippolyte Clairon.

By Frederick Hawkins.

PART II.

It is needless to say that the eminence so deservedly won in a few hours by this girl-actress—a "gallant vessel on the ocean of French dramatic genius, now sailing gallantly in the moonlight that sleeps along its waves, now scudding before the breeze in all the glory of sunshine, and anon tossed hither and thither amid storms and darkness"—was not lost sight of by the dramatic poets of the time. Many tragedies were written in the hope that she might appear in them, and nearly all of those in which she did appear received at least a temporary vitality from her disciplined art and intensity of passion. Marmontel was indebted to her in a large measure for the success of his first two plays—"Denis le Tyrant" and "Aristomène." In the former, it may be premised, he had given effect to an idea which had occurred to him at the outset, though only to be rejected as too hazardous. The younger Dionysius, in order to disarm the factions, retains his mistress as a hostage in his father's palace. Green-room idlers held that this scene would make or mar the piece. "Well," said the dramatist to the actress, "I accept the presage. It depends upon you to settle the question in my favour. When young Dionysius opposes your deliverance, if you see the audience rising against this effort of virtue, do not leave them time to murmur, but, pressing the reply, boldly pronounce the lines beginning:

'Va, ne crains rien.'"

Clairon saw his meaning, and, acting upon the advice with all the force at her command, evoked a burst of enthusiasm which set criticism at defiance. "'Mérope'" he tells us, "was the first piece which gave rise to a 'call' for the author; 'Denis le Tyrant' was the second." In "Aristomène," perhaps, Mdlle. Clairon was

still more superb. Marmontel says that Voltaire, who sat with him in the author's box on the first night, "leapt for joy at the effect of the third act, where Léonide, loaded with chains like a criminal, appeared in the midst of her judges, commanded them by her dignity and greatness of soul, obtained full possession of the stage and the hearts of the spectators, turned her defence into accusation, and distinguishing among the senators the virtuous friends of Aristomène from his faithless enemies, attacked and overwhelmed the latter with a conviction of their perfidy:—'Brava, Clairon,' he cried, 'macte animo, generose puer.'" Nor did he fail to profit himself by the gifts so eulogised. It was for her that he intended Electre in his "Oreste," Idamé in "L'Orphelin de la Chine," and Aménaïde in "Tancrède." Lekain, the hero of the second piece, quaintly acknowledged that she overshadowed him. "Mdlle. Clairon," he said, "joue Gengis-Khan; je suis réduit à ne jouer qu' Idamé." Aménaïde came to be one of the characters with which she associated her name. Favart tells us that "Tancrède" was often called Mdlle. Clairon's tragedy. "Ah, mon cher maître," wrote Diderot to Voltaire, then in his exile at Ferney, "if you could see her crossing the stage in the last act, half supported by the executioners surrounding her, her knees threatening to give way, her eyes closed, her arms hanging down as though in death—if, too, you could hear her cry on recognising Tancrède—you would be convinced more than ever that acting sometimes has a pathos beyond all the resources of the art of oratory."

Nine or ten years after her *début*, in the plenitude of her power and authority, Clairon began to come forward under different conditions. Marmontel, of whom she was at one time enamoured, frequently urged her to cultivate a simple and more natural style of acting, pointing out that force without suppleness and truth was nearer to rant than sensibility. "You have," he would say to her, "all the means of excellence in your art; and, great as you are, it would be easy for you to rise above yourself by managing more carefully the talents of which you are so prodigal. You cite to me your brilliant successes; you cite to me the opinion of M. de Voltaire, who recites his verses with emphasis, and who pretends that declamation requires the same pomp as the style. I have an irresistible feeling that declamation, like style, may be noble, and majestic, and tragic, with simplicity;

that expression, to be lively and profoundly penetrating, requires gradations, shades, unforeseen and sudden traits, which it cannot have when stretched and forced." "I see," she sometimes replied, "that you will never let me rest until I have assumed a familiar and comic tone in tragedy." "No," he said, "that you will never have; Nature has forbidden it. You even have it not while you are speaking to me; the sound of your voice, the air of your countenance, your pronunciation, your gestures, your attitudes are naturally noble; by changing your style you will only be more impressive." Suddenly, in the course of an engagement at Bordeaux, she resolved to try the effect of what he recommended. In her own words, it had the greatest success, murmurs of "mais cela est beau!" being raised in the first scene. On her return she had to play Roxane before the Court at Versailles. Marmontel went to see her at her toilet. For the first time, he says, he found her dressed in the habit of a sultana, without hoop, her arms half bare, and in the truth of eastern costume. "Yes," she said, after relating her experience at Bordeaux, "and I am going to try the new style here. Go and hear me. If I succeed as well, farewell to my old declamation. Marmontel did not fail to witness the performance. "The event," he writes, "surpassed our expectations. It was no longer the actress, it was Roxane herself whom the audience thought they heard. The surprise, the illusion, the enchantment was extreme." After the play he congratulated her. "Ah!" she said, "don't you perceive that it ruins me? The truth of declamation requires that of dress. All my rich stage wardrobe is from this moment rejected. I am poorer by twelve hundred guineas; but the sacrifice is made." In the result, perceiving what her predecessors—with possible exceptions in favour of Adrienne Lecouvreur and Marie Favart—had entirely overlooked, that "a new degree of probability and interest was given to theatrical action by truth of costume," the actress at length set herself to accomplish a much-needed reform on this head—a project ardently seconded by Lekain. "L'Orphelin de la Chine" was the first piece in which the two players showed the courage of their convictions. Clairon appeared in it without the enormous panier then in vogue; Lekain had the hardihood to lay aside the time-honoured wig. Marmontel states that the actors forthwith abandoned their curious mixture of ancient and modern dress in plays on Greek and Roman subjects; but the fact would

seem to be that the innovation thus hazarded found only a gradually-increasing acceptance at the theatre.

Materially strengthened by her more natural method, Clairon reaped triumph after triumph at the Comédie Française until the spring of 1765, when the theatre was closed for the usual Easter vacation. In the interval an unusual degree of commotion might have been observed in the green-room. One Dubois, "who for the last twenty-nine years," to quote from Grimm, "had enjoyed the confidence of all the tragic heroes, had been charged with the honourable duty of reciting to the pit the fine speeches that make French tragedy so probable, and had exercised himself with success as simple valets on deigning to exchange the buskin for the sock," had consulted a surgeon named Benoît under very discreditable circumstances, and on receiving the bill declared most stoutly that he had paid it. Benoît then brought an action against him for the amount. His comrades, irritated to find a *comédien du roi* mixed up in such a dispute, referred the matter to a Gentleman of the Chamber, with the result that they were allowed to decide upon it themselves. Inquiry and examination followed; Dubois, driven into a corner, confessed to having lied through thick and thin, and at the suggestion of Clairon he was ignominiously expelled from the company. But the story was not to end here. Pretty Mdlle. Dubois, the culprit's daughter, an actress, espoused her father's cause with the most commendable zeal. Next day, sweet as a Venus rising from the sea, she appeared before the Duc de Fronsac, one of her admirers, and urged him to have her "respectable père" reinstated at the theatre. Her prayer was readily granted, as may be inferred from the fact that an hour or two later, accompanied by the enamoured duke and two other sprigs of nobility, she broke in upon a rehearsal in the green-room with an order to the effect that Dubois should be permitted to play his usual parts until the king determined the question of his fitness to remain a royal player. But five of his comrades—Clairon, Lekain, Brizard, Molé, and Dauberval—were not to be diverted from their purpose. Cost them what it might, they resolved not to appear with Dubois again.

It was on the evening of the same day that the Comédie reopened its doors after the recess. "Le Siége de Calais" had been announced, and Dubois, who played Manny, firmly refused to let his place be taken by anybody else. Consequently the five

mutineers were conspicuous by their absence as the time for raising the curtain arrived. What could be done? It was an anxious moment for the players behind the scenes, as the assembled audience, induced by various hirelings of Dubois in the house to believe that the absentees had capriciously declined to fulfil their duties, were getting into an angry and vindictive mood. Bouret, a member of the company, at length came forward to announce that, owing to the defection of particular players, the "Joueur" would be substituted for the "Siége de Calais," and that those who did not care to see the former might have their admission money returned. "Messieurs," he said, "we are in despair." "None of that," gruffly interposed a spectator in the pit; "we want the 'Siége de Calais.'" Hereupon a deafening clamour arose, and the actor, finding that he was not likely to obtain a hearing, returned to the green-room. Préville, giving the signal for the curtain to go up, went in for the first scene in the "Joueur," but was hissed off the stage. Before long the spirit of tumult reigned supreme, fierce objurgations upon the refractory players being coupled with demands for their immediate incarceration. Clairon seems to have been singled out for particular resentment. Exaggerated stories of her disdainful pride had already qualified her popularity. Cries of "Clairon à prison!" "Frétillon à l'Hôpital!" "Clairon au For-l'Evêque!" frequently made themselves heard above the prevailing din. No such riot had yet been witnessed in the first theatre of Paris. Eventually the audience was prevailed upon to disperse, though not before the Garde Royale, under the command of the Maréchal de Biron, had made up for a curious supineness at the outset by warnings scarcely to be despised.

Subsequent events could not but intensify what Bachaumont calls the "surprising excitement" caused in Paris by this disturbance. In a conference with M. de Sartines, Lieutenant-General of the Police, the Gentlemen of the Chamber, always responsible to the king for the well-being of the Comédie Française, decided to make an example of the five players by clapping them for an indefinite period in For-l'Evêque, the ancient Forum Episcopi, situated in the Rue St. Germain l'Auxerrois. Brizard and Dauberval were conducted thither a few hours afterwards. More difficulty was experienced in discovering Lekain and Molé, who, hearing of the punishment intended for them, had

retired to a friend's house at a short distance from the city in the hope that the storm would soon blow over. On the same day, however, they were sent to join Brizard and Dauberval. "Better this," wrote Lekain from his durance, "than to be seen on the stage with such a rascal as Dubois." Clairon was arrested at the house of Mdme. Berthier de Savigni, wife of the Intendant de Paris. "In an analagous case in your regiment," the actress asked an officer present, "would you not have acted in the same way?" "Doubtless," was the reply; "mais se ne serait pas un jour de siége." On her road to prison she loftily remarked that her life and possessions were at the mercy of the king, but not her honour. Her custodian bethought himself of an old legal maxim. "True," he said; "où il n'y a rien le roi perd ses droits"—a jest which, carefully bruited about by the jester, gave infinite amusement to the town. But the imprisonment of the actors was really a triumph for each. Every evening the approaches to the gaol were blocked with the carriages of those who came to tender them expressions of sympathy, to cheer them with a little lively conversation, and also to partake (in company with the governor) of delightful suppers over which they presided.

Before long the authorities had cause to reconsider their decision. As may be supposed, the current of public feeling turned decisively in favour of the prisoners as soon as it became known that they had been actuated simply by a determination to uphold the credit of their order, and had had the boldness to disregard at least the intention of an order emanating from the detested Court. In such a play-loving city as Paris, too, the prospect of their being kept off the boards for even a few weeks was hardly to be endured. Evidently mindful of all this, the Gentlemen of the Chamber thought fit to liberate the offending players, though only by degrees. Lekain, Molé, Brizard, and Dauberval were allowed to play at the theatre, on the condition, however, that they returned to prison at the end of the performance. Nobody now supposed that they had meant any disrespect for the public, but the Lieutenant of Police insisted that before they reappeared an apologetic address which he had drawn up should be delivered from the stage by Bellecourt, and a magistrate went in his robes to report whether it had been spoken according to copy. "If I did not love the Comédie better than myself," said the actor selected for the task, "I should have been

unable to get through it." Five days after her arrest, Clairon, having procured a medical certificate that her health had been gravely affected by prison life, received permission to return home, but was forbidden to go out or see more than four persons at a time. Like her comrades, she still refused to be associated in any way with Dubois, who then found himself compelled to retire on the full pension. Eventually, the persecuted players recovered their full liberty, Clairon in twenty-one days, the others in about twenty-four.

If the authorities believed that things at the Comédie Française would now go on as before they were grievously disappointed. The men resumed their places, but Clairon, stung to the quick by the humiliation she had undergone, resolved to quit the stage for good. Her services as a *comédienne du roi*, extending as they did over more than two decades, entitled her to a pension of 1,500 livres a year, and out of her receipts she had saved enough to make a moderate competency. Her application was based on a justifiable plea of ill-health; but the First Gentleman of the Chamber, the Duc de Richelieu, would not readily accede to her wishes. He gave her leave of absence until the following Easter, adding that if she did not recover by that time he would again consider the matter. Clairon took advantage of this handsome *congé* to pay a visit to Voltaire, to whom she idolatrously fell upon her knees as, without standing on ceremony, he ran out of his chateau to welcome the long-expected guest. In her eyes he had always been a sort of demi-god. On his side, the aged philosopher was quite prepared to view her as a demi-goddess, especially after witnessing in his little theatre the superb combination of art and truth which her acting had presented for the last thirteen years. Among the heroines she played there was the Electre of his "Oreste." According to Marmontel, this character, which the poet had induced her to declaim with a continual and monotonous lamentation, acquired, when spoken naturally, a charm unknown to himself. "It is not I who wrote that," he exclaimed at the close, with tears in his eyes; "'tis Clairon who has created the part!" On her return to Paris it was believed that she would reappear at the Comédie, but no argument or entreaty could do more than temporarily shake her resolution. In the prime of womanhood, with her voice and personal beauty as little impaired by time as her intellect, this wayward and in-

trepid daughter of genius voluntarily abandoned a profession in which she had been supreme for nearly a quarter of a century.

Few incidents of special interest mark the records of her subsequent life. For some time she lived in a house near the Pont Royal, and on particular days would surround herself with representative throngs of artists, men of letters, and *beaux esprits*. Marmontel speaks of her receptions as "numerous and brilliant." One evening, dressed as a priestess of Apollo, with a crown of laurel in her hand, she might have been found ardently reciting to her guests an ode by the author of "Denis" in praise of Voltaire, a bust of whom was on a pedestal at her side. Five years after her retirement from the stage, having a friend at court in the person of the Duchesse de Villeroi, she was selected, though not without a good deal of opposition from the admirers of Mdlle. Dumesnil, to head the cast for a performance of "Athalie" in the private theatre at Versailles during the fêtes in honour of the marriage of the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette—a performance apparently intended to exhibit a masterpiece of dramatic poetry in combination with the finest histrionic talent then procurable. Her acting as the Jewish Queen seems to have fallen below expectation, but we may not unreasonably assume that its effect was interfered with by a spectacular grandeur theretofore unattempted in a French theatre. "No language," we are told in the Fleury memoirs, "could do justice to the magnificence of the chief scene. When the great temple opened, discovering the King of the Jews seated on his throne of gold, with five hundred Levites and warriors marching on from different points, the picture was at once imposing and terrific. It realised all the ideas I had conceived of the splendour of Jerusalem." Meanwhile, with characteristic energy, the actress had striven to relieve her old profession from the ban so long laid upon it by the clergy, who still refused to allow players to marry, take the sacrament, or receive a Christian burial unless they had sworn to abandon the stage. In this she failed, as did Saint Florentin, a courtier of the day, in attempting to regain for them the privileges of *valets de chambre comédiens du roi* (a dignity conferred upon them by Richelieu in the name of Louis XIII.) "No," said the King; "in my reign they shall never be what they have been in those of my predecessors; let no more be said to me on the subject." At the age of fifty, after preparing two acceptable

recruits—Larive and Mdlle. Raucourt—for the Comédie Française, Clairon migrated to the court of the Margrave of Anspach, where she remained seventeen years. During this time she wrote much of her autobiography, besides some valuable "Réflexions sur la Déclamation Théâtrale." In 1791, the Margrave dying, she returned to Paris, and before long was reduced to comparative poverty by the general stoppage of court pensions as the monarchy fell. For this loss she had some consolation in the profits of her "Mémoires et Réflexions," which came out in 1799, and of which a second edition was called for in a few months. With her mind apparently unimpaired to the last, she died in sleep on the 18th of January, 1803, within a few weeks of completing her eightieth year. Her book had revived the tradition of her greatness, and old playgoers who had escaped the scythe of the Revolution may well have experienced a little sentimental regret on hearing that this bright link with the past had snapped. Nor did the moralist fail to remark upon the contrast between her necessitous old age and her former position in the world—a position so elevated that to have met her in society was one of the proudest boasts indulged in by the braggart in "Candide."

END.

Last Summer.

I STAYED my dusty tramp along the lane,
And peeped with curious eyes athwart the hedge,—
The house was cool and shady. Peeped again
And saw the rose-leaves on the window ledge;
And then two woman-hands, so soft, so white,
That stirred their fragrance; and at last my eyes,
No longer blinded by the noon-day light,
Perceived the figure in blue draperies.
The sun-blind at the window showed a tear,
And pouring through it came a molten stream
Of yellow sunshine on her dusky hair.
The sweet fulfilment of a poet's dream
Lay brooding in her eyes; and all the stir
Of murmurous country sound about my feet
Grew hushed and silenced as I looked at her,
And felt my holiday at length complete.
Half-child, half-woman, with a tender mouth
That augured gentle counsellings and love,
The amorous breezes of the balmy south
On roses on the ledge, on lips above,
Pressed equal kisses and believed them one!
. . . . A lingering glance, and then she moved away,
And in the dusty lane I stood alone,
And missed the brightness from the summer's day.

Envoy.

You whose name I never knew,
Calling you "Sweet eyes of blue,"
May you read this rhyme!
At the window take your stand,
With the rose-leaves in your hand,
As that summer-time;
And with tender, serious face
Consecrate that sunny place
To the passers through;
Then will they as sure as I
Keep in happy memory
That same thought of you.

M. E. W.

Our Musical-Box.

The most interesting musical episode of the 1886 season has been Mr. Rosa's brief reign at Drury Lane—a genial and beneficent interregnum of excellent all-round performances of tastefully mounted and admirably stage-managed works, fulfilling to the letter every promise held out by the *impresa*, and giving the opera-loving public considerably more than its money's worth. All Mr. Rosa's "principals" have done well; his orchestra has maintained its long-established reputation for intelligence, vigour, and delicacy; his chorus-singers, for vocal quality and truthful intonation, may confidently challenge competition throughout Europe. Nothing could be more irreproachable than his production of such public favourites as "Carmen," "Faust," "The Bohemian Girl," "Maritana," and "Nadeshda." To e last-named opera I listened with unalloyed pleasure. What a charming work! How graceful, genial, truly melodious, and thoroughly musicianly! Where shall we find now-a-days—in this country or on the Continent—a composer who writes equally well for the voices and for the orchestra, except Mr. Goring Thomas? Certainly not in Germany, the operatic products of which barren land, once the genitrix of great creative musicians, have been for some years past unworthy of serious criticism. Not in Italy, now that Verdi is steadfastly silent, and Ponchielli has been snatched away in his prime. Not in France, where Massenet's frothy plagiarisms and Délibes' pleasant prettinesses pass for works of "national genius." And, I fear, not even here—though we may be justly proud of possessing composers endowed with creative and constructive faculties of a very high order—where accomplished and ingenious musicians allow themselves to be betrayed by hero-worship into servile imitations of methods and mannerisms which, when informed by transcendant genius, have won public admiration in spite of their intrinsic deformities; but, when aped by mere talent, pain the ear by their uncouth crabbedness, and weary the intelligence by their laboured intricacy. Of this imitative sin Mr. Goring Thomas is never guilty. True, his musical nature is impregnated with the style of his great master, and with certain transitional "tricks and manners" of a still greater tone-poet than Ambroise Thomas—to wit, Charles Gounod. But he has the true melodic gift; beautiful tunes suggest themselves to him with unmistakable spontaneity; and he never condescends to perpetrate sheer ugliness on the pretext, forsooth, that it is strictly in keeping with the dramatic requirements of a character or a situation.

In adding such charming and ever-attractive works as "Nadeshda" and "Esmeralda" to his *répertoire* Mr. Rosa has shown sound musical and managerial judgment, which has had its well-merited reward in the genuine eagerness with which the great British public—provincial as well as metropolitan—has bestowed its favour upon these operas. It is to be regretted that the energetic *impresario's* laudable efforts to give publicity to the creations of English composers should not have uniformly met with the success that has crowned them in the case of Mr. Goring Thomas's delightful inspirations. As a matter of fact these latter, of all the operas by contemporary English musicians which Mr. Rosa has produced, are the only ones which have repaid him the heavy expenses incurred in bringing them out. Nor can anybody connected with the production of less fortunate works be fairly blamed for its unfortunate results save the *impresario* himself. Mr. Rosa is no ordinary theatrical manager, but a ripe musician, experienced conductor, and shrewd man of the world, well able to gauge the taste of a public he has catered for, with profit and honour to himself, for a considerable number of years. An operatic score is as easy reading to him as is a Sanscrit poem to Edwin Arnold; it would seem, to anyone who knows him as well as I do, all but impossible that he should mistake its meaning, or form an erroneous estimate of its musical and commercial value. And yet Mr. Rosa has wasted large sums of money, and misapplied the talents of his excellent company, in producing three English operas which have turned out dismal failures. No manager of my acquaintance is more deeply convinced than is Mr. Rosa that the first duty of an *impresario* is to make his enterprise pay, and that mere sentimental considerations should never be allowed to preponderate over those affecting his own immediate interests. I have ere now set forth Mr. Rosa's views in this regard, deeming them eminently reasonable and just, in the pages of THE THEATRE; I know how keenly he has felt the disappointments which accrued to him in consequence of the frigid reception accorded by the paying public (not by audiences of first-nighters and dead-heads, whose verdicts are notoriously untrustworthy) to "Moro," "Colomba," and the lugubrious "Canterbury Pilgrims"; and, therefore, I am somewhat at a loss to conjecture how he can have allowed himself to be cajoled—surely against his better judgment—into accepting so infelicitous a work as "The Troubadour," performed by the Carl Rosa company for the first time at Drury Lane on the 8th ult. What hope could he possibly have cherished of success with the British public—which plumes itself on its propriety, craves for amusement, and delights in organic melody—for a revolting story, clumsily and tiresomely told, and set to music which, whatever its merits of construction and contrivance may be, is paramountly untuneful? The production of this gruesome work at our chief national theatre by such an intelligent man as Carl Rosa is an event surrounded by gloomy mystery.

The libretto of "The Troubadour" has been written by Dr. Franz Hüffer, a learned musical essayist who, when he published his maiden effort in the way of an operatic text, was good enough to point out to the

public that no literary man of English birth had ever produced a libretto of any value, and kindly volunteered to show us dull islanders the way to conceive and construct a perfect work of that description. The model he put forward for our admiration and imitation was the "book" of "Colomba." Strange to say, the rhymed and blank verses of this libretto, described by their author as "poetry," proved to be profusely disfigured by the "Della Cruscan mannerisms" with the perpetration of which he severely reproached British librettists of the past and present. Dr. Hüffer's share of "Colomba" bristled with barbarisms and false concords; it was obviously the outcome of arduous and intelligent labour, but lacked spontaneity and grace. In the opinion of several eminent musicians many of the lines were so difficult to set that they must have laid a great strain upon Mr. Mackenzie's patience and ingenuity, and seriously handicapped him in the performance of his musical undertaking. One or two of my critical colleagues, to whose judgments the great London public is accustomed to listen with deference, did not hesitate to attribute the commercial failure of "Colomba" (upon which opera Mr. Rosa had based such high expectations) to the dulness of the "book," which, as they alleged, had obviously dispirited and hampered the composer. It was my conviction, after hearing the opera in question twice, that it was not only a singularly beautiful musical achievement, but, in some respects, the most important work of its class ever theretofore created by an English composer; and to that conviction I adhere. But "Colomba" was not a popular success, despite the charm that pervaded some of its musical numbers; and that regrettable circumstance should have taught its composer, as well as the *impresario* who commissioned Mr. Mackenzie to write another opera for the Carl Rosa company, a salutary lesson. By that lesson, however—if they learned it—they do not appear to have profited; for Mr. Mackenzie has again harnessed his muse to a ponderous, halting, and lugubrious text, against the depressing influence of which he has struggled in vain; and Mr. Rosa has invested a large sum of money in the artistic preparation and production of a work which he will be compelled to relegate to the limbo of his "failures" after performing it a few times *pour acquit de conscience.*

It may be that Dr. Hüffer's veneration for the late Richard Wagner has induced him to follow the example set to Latter-Day librettists by that great poet in his book of the Nibelung Trilogy; that is to say, to people the stage with criminals devoid of any redeeming quality. I cannot but think, however, that he was unwise in offering so contemptible a crew as the characters of "The Troubadour' to the attention of the English public. Even the glamour of Wagner's genius could not seduce that public into condoning the abominations spoken and acted by the maleficent gods and noisome heroes of the Tetralogy; a stubborn fact which should have warned operatic librettists against the commission of offences against decency and good-feeling when catering for British opera-house audiences—at least, for some time to come, until we haply achieve

the stolid indifference to moral cleanliness that has been attained by German audiences, who are as tolerant of the filthy Wotan as though he were a typical Aulic Councillor of unspotted reputation, the father of a dozen well-conducted children begotten in honourable wedlock. But the avowed dislike entertained in this country to *dramatis personæ* steeped in malefaction and meanness has not deterred Dr. Hüffer from acting as literary godfather to a set of wretches whose words and deeds are calculated to inspire contempt and loathing in the breasts of all honest folk who may be moved by curiosity to read the libretto of "The Troubadour." With the exception of Count Robert—a poor gullible creature enough—all the "principals" of the opera are despicable delinquents. The hero deliberately dishonours a nobleman who entertains him with splendid and cordial hospitality; the heroine is a determined adulteress; her sister connives at her shame, and perjures herself for a purpose indescribable to ears polite; whilst Count Raimon, the injured husband, whose wrongs amply justify him in punishing his vile wife and her treacherous paramour, does so in such a cowardly and disgusting manner that anything like sympathy with so pitiful a dastard is utterly out of the question. Like "Tristan and Isolde," "The Troubadour" calls upon its hearers to commiserate the mishaps of a couple of unprincipled sensualists, who do not hesitate to trample under foot every law of honour, every dictate of self-respect, in order to gratify their animal passions. The degradations of adulterous intercourse are invested with a pathetic interest in the dialogue and lyrics, and even suggested most indecorously in action upon the stage. The objectionable love-scene in "Tristan" exhibits no item of "business" so offensive as the pantomime of Guillem and Margarida behind the former's cloak in Count Raimon's garden, whilst the *complaisante* Azalais contemplates their dumb-show from a window overlooking the grounds. Time was when the actors representing so unwholesome a "situation" would have been hissed off the stage of any London theatre. We are less scrupulous nowadays than were our fathers before us; and I, for one, am sorry for it.

Mr. Mackenzie's music is as essentially Wagnerian in its mannerisms as Dr. Hüffer's libretto is in its immorality. It teems with "guiding phrases," symphonic descriptiveness, mutilated melodies, and ingenious orchestral contrivance. It subordinates the voices to the band with inflexible indifference to the public predilection for organic tunes; it sets hard, hard tasks, in the way of awkward intervals and high-pitched declamation, to the vocalists; in short, it proves Mr. Mackenzie to be a past-master of his craft, and fills some of his sincerest admirers—myself among the number—with inexpressible regret that so much superb creative and constructive power should be squandered in the production of so unsatisfactory a result. "The Troubadour" is here and there enriched with musical gems of inestimable preciousness, conspicuously in the orchestral introductions to Acts I. and III., in the admirable "Masque" and "Jeu de Paume," and in Azalais' minatory song, "Ah!

me, the dawn it comes too soon." But, considered in its entirety, it is too gloomy, heavy, and laboured to please a public which is as yet barbarous—or shall I say sensible—enough to regard "endless melody" as a synonym for wearisome untunefulness. Enough of "The Troubadour," for which dismal kinsman of "Il Trovatore" all the artistes engaged in its performance did their very best on the occasion of its production. Whether they or their audience were most to be pitied is a question which I do not feel competent to answer.

At Covent Garden, for a wonder, there have been good all-round performances of Italian opera, in the course of which no fewer than three new and highly interesting *prime donne* made their *débuts* in London. The venture, from a pecuniary point of view, belongs to Messrs. Gayarre and Maurel, whose agent for the time being "bosses" their show, and is understood to repudiate any family connection with the Lady of the Lake. Of the gifted trinity of *débutantes* I may say that they are all three good vocalists, intelligent actresses, and well favoured women; that they have pleasant voices, sing steadfastly in tune, and are neither lacking in power nor flexibility. Miss Ella Russell's topmost register is unquestionably her best and most effective; but she has been well taught, although an American by birth, and bridges over the natural gaps between the so-called *voce di testa* and *voce di petto* in a very artistic and satisfactory manner. Her best part is Lucia; she is, however, a sympathetic Gilda and a sweetly unaffected Gretchen. Miss Teodorini, the young Roumanian "leading lady" who took musical London most agreeably by surprise three weeks ago in the strong and onerous *rôle* of Valentine, is as good a dramatic soprano as they make them nowadays either in Italy or Germany. Moreover, she is neither fat nor elderly, like the majority of Valentines. Her acting is extremely forcible; her voice fresh, mellow, and vigorous; her intonation as nearly faultless as can be that of any singer who adopts the *vibrato* method of production; her phrasing truly admirable, a treat to old fogies like myself, who remember the glories of the Italian school forty years ago; her declamation energetic, articulate, and replete with significance. In "Les Huguenots" and "Gioconda" she established her reputation, once for all, in this country, as a really first-class singer and actress. Mdlle. Valda (Miss Wheelock), too, is a consummate vocal artist. Her voice is a light soprano of singularly bright quality and finished pliability, perfectly under her control, and produced to its greatest advantage. She came out (at Covent Garden) in Verdi's dear old "Ballo," which London had not heard for ever so many years, and was delighted to listen to again. Her reception, as soon as the audience found out what right good stuff she was made of, was as enthusiastic as she could have wished it to be, and deservedly so. I liked Gayarre less than ever this year; his eternal transitions from bellow to whisper and *vice versâ* are no less irritating than wearisome. Signor d'Andrade is simply one of the best vocal and dramatic artists of the day, with a noble voice, gallant bearing, and

superb delivery. I hope that the Covent Garden *impresa* will clear its expenses, which must have been very heavy; but the paper-hanger has been visible to the naked eye at every performance of the series, though one and all were thoroughly deserving of public support.

June was, as usual, full of concerts, only a few of which are specially worthy of mention in a monthly notice of such entertainments. The Rubinstein Recitals have been so exhaustively thrashed out by my daily and weekly colleagues that I may be exonerated from attempting any detailed description of their executive wonders. Every professional and amateur musician who knows anything knows that Anton "Moldovéanul" is the greatest pianist alive—that his physical resources are as inexhaustible as his memory—and that his capacity for varying the force and quality of his touch, and of eliciting uncounted *nuances* of tone-colour from the clavichord, is quite unique, now that the venerable Canon of Albano has been robbed by inflexible Time of some of his extraordinary powers of manipulation. Rubinstein repeated at St. James's Hall his *tours de force* of Vienna and Berlin, averaging thirty *morceaux* at each of his eight recitals, the programmes of which embraced every known school of pianism. All his performances were well attended, and I rejoice to say that he cleared a large sum of money by the series. In the opening concert of the past month Emil Bach's favourite pupil, little Pauline Ellice, covered herself with glory by interpreting Weber's P.F. Concerto in C major and Mendelssohn's Capriccio in B minor with no less remarkable intelligence than technical correctness; Deane Brand's sweet, rich voice was displayed to great advantage in two of Maude White's charming songs, "The Devout Lover" and "Absent, yet Present"; Mdlle. de Lido delighted her hearers by an admirable rendering of "Come back to me"; and Mrs. Armstrong, the brilliant Australian soprano, took a foremost place amongst contemporary concert-room singers of her class. Mdlle. Le Brun's annual concert came off on June 12 at No. 1, Prince of Wales' Terrace, and proved—as in former years—an excellent afternoon's entertainment. The *bénéficiaire*, who has been singing in first-rate form all through the season, earned cordial applause and numerous recalls in well-chosen songs by Rubinstein, Schubert, and Bizet, and in M. A. Kingston's "Come back to me," which this talented vocalist had previously sung with uniform success at the concerts of Sigg. Denza and Romano. For her own *matinée* she had secured the valuable co-operation of Madame Sanderini, Misses Elliott, Kahn, and Lang, Sigg. De Monaco, Ria, and Bonetti, and (last, though by no means least) Mr. Isidore de Lara. Gospodin Dmitri Slaviansky d'Agreneff's justly renowned Russian Choir gave the first of a series of performances of Russian sacred and national part-songs at St. James's Hall on the 16th ult. So picturesque a choir has certainly never before been seen in a London concert-room. The Slaviansky chorists are arrayed

in historical costumes of remarkable splendour, and artistically grouped—men, women, and children—in such sort as to present a really gorgeous spectacle to the eye. They sing as magnificently as they look, which is really saying a good deal. M. d'Agreneff (Ivan de Twer) himself is the possessor of a peculiarly sympathetic tenor voice, and amongst his *bassi* there is one superb organ of far greater richness and compass than any of the celebrated *profondissimi* of St. Isaak's at Petersburg. Several members of the *impresario's* family take part in the concerted music; their singing is simply perfection. The Russian language, wedded to sweet music, sounds every whit as mellifluous as Italian; how delightful to listen to such coaxing words as "Kalinka, malinka moya," which, by the way, are set to a curiously "catching" "Entertainment Song" belonging to the far Tamboff district, and mean in our vernacular "My Guelder Tree! My Raspberry Bush!" A pathetic song called "Ivoshka zelonaia moya" ("Willow, green willow!"), and alleged to be the oldest composition of its class known in Russia, was so tenderly rendered as to draw tears from many of those who heard it for the first time at St. James's Hall. Moritz Moszkowski's new Orchestral Suite, written expressly for the Philharmonic Society, and performed for the first time at that association's last concert this season, is a truly charming work. Each of its five movements has a special fascination of its own, and all of them teem with musicianly intelligence and genuine poetic feeling. In Moszkowski the musical world possesses a fertile and graceful melodist, as well as a consummate orchestrator. His tunes are deliciously dainty and his instrumental effects sometimes novel, frequently ingenious, and always agreeable to the cultured hearer. The Suite to which I allude will, I venture to prophesy, become a public favourite in this country and a "stock" item in the programmes of London instrumental concerts. The space at my disposal only permits me to say a few words about the two stupendous Wagner evenings of the Richter series. As might have been expected, the orchestral renderings of "Tristan" (Act II.) and of the glorious Siegfried epsiode were beyond all praise; and scarcely less excellent were the vocal achievements of the soloists engaged by Dr. Hans, with the exception of those emanating from Herr Gudehus, who was painfully hoarse, and whose voice, when at his best, is harsh, hard, and rasping. But Frau Malten and Fraeulein Cramer sang superbly, and so did George Henschel, who succeeded in imparting deep human interest to King Marke's lugubrious monologue upon the shortcomings of friendship and the inconvenience of old monarchs being cut out with their young wives by sensual nephews. At the first of these two momentous concerts I met Aulic Councillor Dr. Edward Hanslick, the most learned of living musical critics, who was holiday-making in London, greatly impressed with the high quality of our operatic orchestral performances, and on the eve of travelling down to Craig-y-Nos to visit the newly-married pair in the

Nightingale's Nest. Of Barton McGuckin the renowned Viennese musician speaks in terms of unqualified praise. I must not omit to mention Signor Vittorio Carpi's annual concert (June 16), a brilliant affair, attended by the Italian Ambassador, the Roumanian and Portuguese Ministers, and a crowd of fashionable notabilities. Signor Carpi's broad and spirited renderings of Italian songs constituted the most salient feature of this excellent entertainment, which, however, presented many other vocal and instrumental attractions of a high order.

Two charming songs, composed by Mr. Charles K. Salaman, to words respectively by Victor Hugo and Friedrich Bodenstedt, "Toujours à toi!" and "Du suesses Maedchen," reached me last month (Novello, Ewer, and Co.). Both are gracefully tuneful, and well written for the singer and accompanist alike. "Toujours à toi!" in particular, is instinct with genuine love passion. "Elaine," a waltz by Mr. Erskine Allon, ought to achieve ball-room popularity, being at once melodious, original, and inspiriting to the dancer. It s issued by the London Music Publishing Company.

A NIGHTINGALE'S WEDDING.

Within the memory of the oldest inhabitant—and the villagers of Ystradgynlais, Ystelafera, Ynyscydwyn, Glyntawe, and Penwylt have a stolid mountaineering habit of attaining extreme old age, centenarians being quite a drug in those hilly hamlets—no such sensation has been created in the Swansea Valley as that aroused during the earlier portion of last month by the marriage of the Queen of Song to the man of her choice. The absorbing interest manifested by Adelina Patti's Welsh neighbours in her nuptials was not solely, or even chiefly, attributable to her great reputation as a vocal and dramatic artist; for the inhabitants of the picturesque region that intervenes between Swansea and Brecon are simple, hardworking folk, unreceptive of news from the great busy world of art, science, and politics in which the Diva's executant feats are eagerly observed and carefully chronicled. The majority of these Cymric rustics scarcely know what a *prima donna* is, or how she earns her income; but every Shenkin and Llewellyn of them is accurately aware that Adelina Patti, the "Lady of the Castle," is rich and generous; that her little hands have dispensed aid and comfort to thousands of poor and suffering Cambrians; that ever since she bought the grey fastness of "the old ancient Powells, look you," she has been the Good Fairy of the Valley, by the magic of her charity transforming sorrow into happiness, and penury into plenty; that no unfortunate (and we who live amongst town comforts and conveniences have no idea how unfortunate the country poor can be, when luck goes against them) ever appealed to her for helpful pity in vain; that she reverences the aged, and loves little children; and, finally, that she experiences no keener pleasure than in sharing with her indigent fellow-creatures the wealth she has accumulated in the course of a quarter of a century's hard and unremitting toil. It was

because they knew these things of her that the valley-folk freely spent their small savings in decking their villages and highways with banners, garlands, and gay devices to do honour to their benefactress on her wedding-day, and forsook their manifold avocations to flock to the hill-engirdled church in which she pronounced her marriage vows, as well as to the Rock of Night, at the foot of which she had prepared good cheer for the inner man, and congenial entertainments for eye and ear of all those who, from far or near, might gratify her by taking part in her nuptial festivities. To this hospitable end had tons of fresh meat, waggonloads of white bread and pastry, and huge casks of strong beer been conveyed from Swansea to Craig-y-Nos; whither also had been summoned military bands, bards of renown, and the great pyrotechnic magician of the Crystal Palace, Brock, who—aided by his potent familiars—made the grim Welsh mountains and darksome valleys glow and shimmer with all the luminous colours of the rainbow. Meanwhile, the school children of the whole district—three thousand in number—were regaled in their respective schoolhouses at the expense of the Good Fairy, who, moreover, clothed three hundred of them, the offspring of her poorer fellow-parishioners, anew from top to toe. For three days and nights before the wedding, four French cooks, and I know not how many local assistants, were busied in the huge castle-kitchen with preparations for the morning and evening banquets of the 10th, at the latter of which over a hundred guests of humble degree—yeomen, tradesfolk, and domestics—sat down to a succulent feast in the long, vaulted servants' hall. But I will endeavour to tell the tale of the marriage celebrations, which has reached me by instalments from eye-witnesses, as coherently as I may.

On Tuesday morning—the morrow of the Diva's return to Craig-y-Nos from London—was formally signed the marriage-contract between Adéle Jeanne Marie Patti and Ernest Nicolini, "sous le régime dotal avec séparation de biens," in the presence of M. de Trobriand, the French Consul at Swansea, both contracting parties being French subjects. Shortly afterwards, the Mayor and Corporation of Brecon (which county-town is some seventeen miles distant from the Rock of Night) waited upon the châtelaine in order to present her with an address of congratulation upon her approaching marriage, and of "deep gratitude for the spontaneous and generous aid" rendered by her to the Brecon hospital, "whereby its usefulness had been so largely promoted." The address concluded as follows:—

"We trust that you may long continue to live among us, and honestly hope that there are in store for you many years of prosperity and happiness, which, we feel sure, will be devoted, as in the past, to the furtherance of the welfare and felicity of those amongst whom your lot is cast."

Augustus ("Daddy") Spalding—well-known to brethren of the buskin, and one of the Diva's oldest friends, replied on her behalf—she was too deeply affected to command her own voice—in very felicitous terms, saying *inter alia*:—

"All the world is agreed that Madame Patti is a most remarkable woman;

but among her splendid talents and noble qualities there is one to which I can especially testify after many years of friendship—the goodness and kindness of her heart, which rise far above all the special gifts with which she has been endowed. . . . She has often assured me that there is no occasion when her satisfaction at the success of the talents with which she has been blessed is so great as when she is using them in the hope of benefiting the lot of her suffering fellow-creatures; above all, when she is enabled to do so on behalf of those who inhabit the country she has selected as her home, in which we all trust that she may spend many future happy years."

The Brecon deputation was followed by others representing various districts of the valley, and bringing with them marriage offerings of terra-cotta vases, silver caskets, and old china, which, with appropriate addresses in Welsh and English, they presented to the bride. On Wednesday, the 9th, the civil rite was performed at the French Consulate in Swansea, whither the happy pair were accompanied by their respective "témoins," the Chevalier Ganz and M. François Magnard, chief editor of the Paris *Figaro*, as well as by Mrs. Brooks, Miss Beerbohm, and Mr. Spalding, returning to the castle about 6 p.m., where they were awaited by the united congratulatory committees of Swansea and Ystradgynlais, bearing their respective addresses and gifts—that of the great Glamorganshire borough being a perfect dessert service of "Old Swansea," manufactured more than a century ago, whilst the post-town of the valley gave a superb casket of oxidised silver and gold, adorned with Cupids in high relief, the monogram "P.N.," and the inscription "Ystradgynlais, June 10, 1886." In this casket, one of Elkington's *chefs-d'œuvre*, the illuminated Ystradgynlais address, engrossed in Welsh, English, and French, and emblazoned with the Red Dragon of Wales, was enclosed. To the addresses, read aloud by Messrs. Hodgson and Talfourd Strick, Mr. Spalding delivered appropriate replies, at the request of his gifted hostess.

On Thursday morning, which had opened somewhat cloudily, the sun shone out gallantly at about ten o'clock, as the nuptial *cortége* quitted Craig-y-Nos, the courtyards and gateways of which were profusely decked with flags and garlands, whilst all the windows of the huge building were set for the nonce in frames of evergreen. Madame Patti and her "witnesses," Messrs. Magnard and Spalding, occupied the first carriage, an open landau, drawn by two dapple-greys dressed out in glittering harness and freshly-cut flowers; a second landau conveyed M. Nicolini and his "witnesses," Messrs. Ganz and Vintras, to the trysting-place; four more landaus and two four-in-hands followed with the wedding guests then actually staying at the castle—to wit, Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Vintras, Mrs. and Miss Beatty-Kingston, Mr. and Mrs. T. Johnson, Miss Beerbohm, Mr. Ganz, jun., M. de Trobriand, M. Milliot, and M. Magnard, jun. As Madame Patti drove up to the gate of Ystradgynlais Church she was received by the local Presentation Committee, and by eight tiny village maidens, dressed in virgin white with sky-blue sashes, and carrying baskets of flowers, the fragrant contents of which they strewed before the bride, as she approached the church leaning on M. Magnard's right arm, the while the full band of a volunteer corps played

gay and welcoming strains. The interior of the church was beautifully decorated with plants and flowers from the Craig-y-Nos conservatories; a huge bouquet of exotics, flanked with two vases of arum lilies, graced the communion-table; tropical plants lined the chancel and aisles; the communion rails were hidden from view by masses of petunias, rhododendrons, ferns, tulips, and lilies; whilst the church pillars were enwreathed in garlands of laurel and cut-blossoms, the eastern window-bays were blocked up with evergreens, and on either side of the altar had been set up fine, young palm-trees, surrounded by beds of mammoth daises and rare tulips. These inimitable floral decorations, I take leave to mention, were mainly due to the tasteful conception and personal arrangement of two ladies in whom I may be excused for taking the very strongest interest.

The bride, arrayed in a lovely dress and bonnet of pale blue silk, shrouded in cream-coloured Duchesse lace, and ornamented with tiny bunches of forget-me-nots and lilies-of-the-valley, was preceded to the altar—where the bridegroom and his "best man" awaited her—by a long procession of her guests and friends, and was followed by the eight little Ystradgynlais maidens. As soon as the ceremony had been performed and the register signed, the *cortége*, headed by the newly-married pair, arm-in-arm, quitted the church to the inspiriting strains of Mendelssohn's Wedding March, and drove rapidly back to Craig-y-Nos between long lines of school-children in holiday garb, under triumphal arches, and past brass bands and local choirs, all vociferously musical, without number. What with friendly societies in their full "regalia," villagers, excursionists from Swansea and Brecon, and the "rising generation" of the valley, there was scarcely a hiatus in the double line of congratulants throughout the seven miles of highway leading from Ystradgynlais to the castle. After the sumptuous wedding breakfast, the ladies of the party retired to their apartments to prepare for the evening festivities, whilst M. Nicolini and his friends whiled away an hour or two by taking a heavy basket of trout in the castle lake. At 7 p.m. the whole wedding party, fifty in number, met at dinner in the great winter-garden, the crystal roof of which has recently been raised several feet. It is one of the most picturesque and stately dining-halls in Europe, commanding an extensive view of the Swansea Valley, the sheeny, babbling Tawe, and the majestic Brecon Beacons. On the evening of the 10th, illuminated by electric lights gleaming like radiant white flower-cups from amongst the broad leaves of tropical creepers—peopled by gaily-dressed guests, seated at long tables adorned with exotics, fairy lamps, sparkling crystal, and glittering plate, it presented a spectacle, as one of my informants states, "never to be forgotten." During dinner the full band of the 3rd Glamorgan Rifles played operatic selections, Welsh airs, dance music, and a bright Wedding March, composed expressly for the occasion by Marie Antoinette Kingston. At the close of the banquet, the electric burners were turned out, and the wedding guests themselves environed by perfumed darkness, watched for an hour or two the splendid display of fireworks and luminous devices exhibited

in the castle grounds, whilst the acclivities and summits of the surrounding mountains, lit up *à jour* by Mr. Brock's artificial fires revealed many thousands of *al fresco* spectators, assembled from all parts of the countryside. The festivities concluded with a ball in the winter-garden, where dancing was kept up until daylight did appear.

A few words must be said—before I conclude this imperfect sketch of an episode in Adelina Patti's life that cannot but be fraught with interest to the whole civilised world—about the wedding-presents and messages of felicitation received by her on the occasion of her second marriage. Amongst the gifts were costly ornaments in brilliants and rubies, sent by Lord and Lady Rothschild and Baron Alfred; a Davenport in rosewood and gold, enriched with hand-painted pastoral scenes, by Mrs. Theodore Brooks; a massive golden tea-service and coffee-service, by Mr. and Mrs. De Young, of San Francisco; a Sévres tea-service, *pâte tendre*, by Mr. Turner; antique golden bowl, encrusted with precious stones, by Mr. A. Spalding; ancient golden bowl and spoons, by Mr. and the Misses Fitz-william Dick; besides some fifty presents of less intrinsic value, offered by personal friends and dependants, all of which were displayed on the wedding-day in the two spacious billiard-rooms of the castle. The congratulatory messages, over 150 in number, included letters from the Prince of Wales and Queen of the Belgians, and telegrams from well-nigh all the Rothschilds, Lord Aberdare, the Duchess of Newcastle, Christine Nilsson and Lily Langtry, Mr. Sassoon, Mr. J. M. Levy, the Marquis di Mercato Bianco, and the Queen of Roumania, whose sympathetic well-wishing deserves reproduction:—

"In sending you my best felicitations, I entertain the warmest hope that the future has in reserve for you as much pleasure as you yourself have already given to the entire world. (Signed) Elizabeth."

I would wind up my account of the Nightingale's Wedding with these kindly Royal words, in the purport of which Madame Patti-Nicolini's innumerable friends and admirers sincerely concur—none more fervently than myself—had not that joyful celebration inspired Mr. Howel Walters, the Bard of Ystradgynlais (with whose Druidical title I mourn to confess myself unacquainted), with a couple of glowing stanzas, the bold rhymes, original rhythms, and ingenious imagery of which entitle them to a place of honour in the pages of The Theatre. It may be doubted that the Poet Laureate himself, or even fiery Algernon Swinburne, could have given birth to bi-lingual verses of so soaring a character, so free from metrical restraints, and untrammelled by constructive precedents, as those engendered by Mr. Walters' fecund and fervid Celtic brain.

[*Tune:* "Rising of the Lark."]

Hail! hail ye sons of Cambria,
Celebrate the Prima Donna
Patti's wedding day;
Sing, Bards and Minstrels, sing
In sweet strains let your voice ring
'Til hills resound the lay;

Gen'rous lady, nought beguile thee,
Heav'n protect thee while on earth ;
Happy union be thy portion—
Bonds of love through life 'til death ;
Boed bywyd swynol sirol syw
Gan Dduw i Madame Patti.

Hark! sons of Muse in praise,
Of warbling notes to Heaven raise,
For Nicolini-Patti;
Brave hearts, the gems of fame,
To-day united in one name ;
Beloved Noble Pair!
Pleasures streaming, life enchanting,
Love and peace each day may bring ;
Realms of glory, for you worthy,
When this earthly frame you leave ;
Mel Awen byth mewn nefol fri,
I Nicolini-Patti.

Let "Mabon" and "Llew Llywydd" look to their laurels! There is One in the Swansea Valley who may yet run them hard in the race for immortal Bardic fame!

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

Our Play-Box.

"JACK."

A Comedy in four acts, produced at the Royalty Theatre on Monday evening, June 14, 1886.

Jack Beamish	Mr. EBEN PLYMPTON.	Teddy Sprott	Mr. W. COMPTON.
Noel Blake	Mr. E J. HENLEY.	Williams	Mr. BURTON.
Major Spotewhite ...	Mr. C. A. WHITE	Lady Blanchmayne ...	Miss CARLOTTA LECLERCQ.
Sebastian Smythe ...	Mr. M. CRACKLES.	Baby Blanchmayne ...	Miss MARIE WILLIAMS.
Mr. Smilie	Mr. M. DREW.	Mrs. Bunn	Miss M. A. GIFFARD.
Bertie Ffolliott	Mr. P. CUNNINGHAM.	Madge	Miss DOROTHY DENE.
Withers...	Mr. FRANCIS.		

"Jack," at the Royalty, a comedy in three acts, which was, it is understood, played some years ago in America, when Mr. Montague took part in the representation, is an adaptation of "La Pierre de Touche," by MM. Augier and Sandeau. It is a curious imitation of the style of Robertson, and boldly plagiarises some of the incidents of Lord Lytton's "Money." We are introduced to the unwashed Bohemians and the exceedingly haughty aristocrats of whom Robertson was so fond, while a will is read which leaves a large fortune to an outsider, thus disappointing a number of the testator's greedy relations. Mr. Blake is a needy musician, and Mr. Beamish an out-at-elbows artist, and with them lives a charming girl, Madge Hesketh. Both the men are in love with her, but she prefers Blake, and Beamish unselfishly forbears to press his own suit. It happens that an eccentric millionaire has

heard one of Blake's compositions, and, having visited the trio in their garret, he not only gives Beamish a commission to paint his portrait, but, as we find in the next act, leaves him a legacy, while he positively bestows all the rest of his fortune on Blake. Here it is, when the will is read, that we have the scene deliberately taken from Lord Lytton. In the next act we find Blake in possession of his wealth, living in a grand house, and entertaining Lady Blanchmayne and her daughter and a Major Spotewhite, relatives of the deceased millionaire. Madge, too, is artlessly staying with him, as if it were quite the proper thing, and also Mr. Beamish, who gives himself such insufferable airs that we cannot wonder at Blake's wishing to get rid of him. It appears that Lady Blanchmayne, disappointed in not receiving the property, is determined to win Blake for her daughter, and that individual is quite astute enough to see that she will be a much more suitable match for a man of property than the ingenuous Madge, especially when she is invariably accompanied by such a rowdy as Beamish. Moreover, another "'Arry," a friend of the old Bohemian days, turns up, and when he and Beamish commence smoking short pipes and drinking in the garden, aided and abetted by Madge, Blake very naturally feels that unless he wants his establishment turned into a pot-house he had better get rid of the whole crew. He is going to do so when a gun is heard, and it seems that the gamekeeper has very properly shot an exceedingly objectionable dog belonging to Beamish, and thereupon that gentleman's blood is up. He had borne the painful necessity of washing himself and wearing comparatively decent clothes; he had given up his pipe until the arrival of a brother "'Arry" seduced him; but the slaughter of his dog is the last straw, and he breaks out into a frenzied denunciation of Blake, vowing to have nothing more to do with him. In the last act the simple Madge has found our that she loves Beamish and not Blake, when straightway another will turns up, and it appears that Beamish is related to the millionaire and gets all the property, the unfortunate Blake being left to shift for himself. Such is the story of a crudely-written and ill-constructed piece, and the intention of the author was evidently to win sympathy for Beamish. It must be confessed, however, that while Blake behaves ungenerously, he is quite right in getting rid of such a man as Beamish, for, as played by Mr. Eben Plympton, the painter is a very rowdy and noisy personage, much given to rant, and obviously better placed in a garret in Charlotte Street than in decent society. Mr. Henley glared through the part of the worldly-minded Blake. When he was not scowling at the stalls, he was looking daggers at his companions on the stage, and he adopted the restless manner of a person suffering from alcoholism. Miss Dorothy Deane gave an earnest and effective rendering of the part of Madge, playing with an amount of feeling that augurs well for her future. Miss Carlotta Leclercq and Miss Marie Williams acted neatly as a fashionable lady and her daughter, and Miss Giffard gave

us a pleasant sketch of a faithful housekeeper. The comedy was received with considerable applause, and Mrs. Becket, the adapter, came before the curtain in response to a loud demand. It was followed by a burlesque, entitled "Mephisto," in which Mr. Henley gave a very exaggerated caricature of Mr. Irving, which lacked the art and verisimilitude of Mr. Dixey's clever imitation. The piece was a trashy and vulgar production, and was deservedly hissed.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

NOTES ON AMERICAN ACTING.

There is no such thing as a veritable American play in London. Minnie Palmer's Dutch baby show has been succeeded by the excellent Daly's company, who are at work on a translation from the German. "Adonis" isn't a play at all, and "The Strategists" is rather fearful fooling of no nationality whatever. In fact, for a memory of a real American play we must go back to burly, bearded Mr. M'Kee Rankin and the red-shirted diggers in "The Danites." Consequently, it is more of the method of the American actors than the work they are engaged on that London talks this month. We have neither a Booth nor a Forrest nor a Jefferson with us, but we have a laughable group of comedy artists well worth study, and how and wherein they differ from our home teams is the question.

The American voice is dry and, to our ears, somewhat harsh, spite of the "song" that runs through the delivery; the men pitch their notes lower and the women as a rule higher than we do. There is little subtlety in their speaking; they have something to say, and they say it and are done with it. There are many of our own actors who will coquette with their words and drag a syllable along like a child's toy at the end of a string, and possibly we rather like this hesitating, lingering fashion—not because it is good elocution, but because it is like our own modern way of speech. But your American is incisive. His "r's" are given remorselessly. He hits his words fairly and squarely on the head, drives each home with a single smart tap, and goes on to the next, big words and little words all receiving a share of his attention. I never yet heard an American actor who did not, to my ears, over-emphasise the indefinite article. Take such a sentence as "I have received a letter" as an illustration. It is easy to imagine one of our drawling young men with his pretty "*I've r'ceived a lettah!*" But of a verity the transatlantic player would give a rap to the "a" (pronounced "eh"), and, probably, sternly insist on the "re" in "received." I cannot help thinking that there is a want of style about this method, but for all that it has a quaint humour peculiarly its own, there is a lurking twinkle beneath its grim decision that in good hands never fails to get home, and we are getting accustomed to it.

"Justinian, this atones for everything."
A NIGHT OFF.

James Lewis

G H Gilbert

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263. OXFORD STREET, W.

"A NIGHT OFF."

An eccentric comedy, by AUGUSTIN DALY, founded on the German by FRANK VON SCHONTHAN.
Produced, for the first time in England, at the Strand Theatre, on Thursday, May 27, 1886.

Justinian Babbit	Mr. JAMES LEWIS.	Mrs. Zantippa Babbit...	Mrs. G. H. GILBERT.
Harry Damask.....	Mr. OTIS SKINNER.	Angelica Damask.....	Miss VIRGINIA DREHER.
Jack Mulberry	Mr. JOHN DREW.	Susan	Miss MAY IRWIN.
The MacMulberry	Mr. WILLIAM GILBERT.	Maria	Miss MAY SYLVIE.
Marcus Brutus Snap ...	Mr. CHARLES LECLERCQ.	Nisbe	Miss ADA REHAN.
Prowl	Mr. F. BOND.		

Glancing at the three American groups until recently playing, we find the "Daly Company" at the top of the class. This is a perfect and compact little army, in which drill, neatness, unison, and close touch of each other seem to be instinctive in each player in its ranks, for here all are in the ranks, and there is no "star" and no officer, save the pervading invisible and untiring spirit of Mr. Augustin Daly, the manager. It was in 1869 that Mr. Daly found Mr. Lewis, the crisp and crackly old man that we all know so well, playing burlesque with Elise Holt in Boston, and discovered that Mrs. Gilbert (in her day and generation a graceful dancer) had a born genius for "old women," and started off with Wilkie Collins's "Man and Wife." Of the old company, only these two popular veterans remain, but gradually the comedy spirit grew. Mr. John Drew came to them ten years ago from his mother's theatre in Arch Street: his father was a celebrated player of Irish character, and I have a boyish memory of his "Handy Andy" at the old Theatre Royal, Dublin—it was subsequently produced at the Haymarket under Buckstone's management. Miss Ada Rehan, whose highly original genius was once veiled in the lowly walks of a walking lady, was "inverted" some six years ago, and she has elaborated a comic method of her own that defies imitation. There is no more agreeable intellectual exercise in London to-night than an affectionate study of this clever lady's sweet silliness. Mr. Otis Skinner has been with them three years, and so the company know each other's ways thoroughly, and the astute manager writes up to their individual styles. They can with ease produce a new play in a fortnight, and their work is constantly being looked after. If "gags" creep in—they will creep in naturally with these funny people—down comes the manager, as he says, "to cut off the barnacles." However, any individual "barnacle" proves good and "in the picture," it is straightway honourably attached to the ship. "The Night Off" is a sparkle from that newly-discovered fount of fun, Germany, and, like many German plays ("On 'Change," the old "Big Bonanza," for instance), turns on the troubles of a professor. I suppose American professors, like their Teutonic types, are not supposed to meddle with play-making or have aught to say to the stage; but we are gradually changing all that, and seek for stage managers from the professoriate of Oxford and Cambridge and the Society of Antiquaries when we make our loftiest dramatic flights. I merely note this in passing as an indication of the march of culture. Who knows but that some fine

day we shall have a burlesque produced by a Bishop. In the play, which is a smart adaptation of Von Schontan's "Der Raub der Sabinerinneu," all is neat and rapid; the Americans shrink from the tirade, the soliloquy, and the conversational dialogue—those literary forms so dear to the French school—and rattle their plot with nervous excitement. The effect is exhilarating, though at times it has a tendency to suggest restlessness: the characters use the device of the "cross" and alteration of stage position with extraordinary frequency. Sometimes they flit across the scene from one door to another as though fearful that we might forget all about them in their absence; but, at all events, they never let a moment go to waste; not an instant drops or drags, and ingenious humour has rarely been seen in so pleasant a dramatic form. I wish we had a comedy company of wits that could stick together. Our clever young players hop about from theatre to theatre, and, since the old "Prince of Wales" days, we have no such knitted band of players as these delightful folk from over the sea. Mohan taught us what *ensemble* means on the stage.

"OUR STRATEGISTS."

A "modern comedy of error," in four acts, "written and acted just for fun."

Produced, for the first time in England, at the Opera Comique, on Saturday, May 29, 1886.

Jack Rutledge	Mr. Henry B. Bell.	Terence O'Flam	Mr. H. Collier.
Major Howard	Mr. Henry Linden.	Rev. John Mildman	Mr Leighton Baker
Arthur Rutledge	Mr. John T. Burke.	Nellie Howard	Miss Katie Gilbert.
Sergeant Gumbledon	Mr. Henry Pincus.	Mrs. Major Howard	Miss Lizzie Creese.
Capsicum Pepper	Mr. Harry Trevor.	Araminta	Miss Lottie Harcourt

"The Strategists" claims to be a "comedy of errors," but it is at best but a farce of errors of judgment. Constant and wearisome disguise is no substitute for dialogue, and the attempts to Anglicise the Americanisms are very futile. Let us have the Americanisms, "Huckleberries" and all; but to talk of "Whiteley's" as "a house down town" is foolish. Miss Katie Gilbert plays with a certain amount of smart mischief, and Mr. Henry Bell has a rough sort of fun about him; but neither play nor players merit recognition as an example of Transatlantic art.

"ADONIS."

American eccentricity, in two acts, by Gill and Dixey.

Produced, for the first time in England, at the Gaiety Theatre, on Monday, May 31, 1886.

Adonis	Mr. Henry E. Dixey.	Miss Mattie	Miss Billee Barlow.
Marquis de Baccarat	Mr. H. Gresham.	Lady Nattie	Miss Ida Bell.
Bunion Turke	Mr. George W. Howard.	Lady Hattie	Miss Emma Hanley.
Artea	Miss Emma Carson.	Lady Pattie	Miss Jennie McNully
Tulamea	Miss Lillie Grubb.	Rosetta	Miss Amelia Somerville.
Duchess of Area	Miss Annie Alliston.		

We are all pretty well agreed about "Adonis." The actor, as his countrywomen would say, is "just charming." His play is very foolish; it is but a pot of stirabout, wherein burlesque, pantomime, opera bouffe, the tricks of the conjuror, the circus, the music-hall are all whisked together with an assortment of "wheezes," new and old, and it is only tolerable for the sake of the picturesque surprises and witty dexterity of young Mr. Dixey. Whether this clever performer could act a part in a play we have no means of judging, but as a

highly original entertainer he stands quite alone. I confess I should like to see him in consistent comedy, but meanwhile all London laughs over the marvellous imitation of Henry Irving. All our young actors give more or less amusing caricatures of the great man—indeed, a young actor who could not, or would not, travesty the Lyceum lessee would be a welcome and original thing—but Mr. Dixey beats them all. His sketch is neither clowning nor caricature: it is a condensed study of startling fidelity. It may be the penalty of success to be caricatured, but it is little short of a triumph to be so faithfully and good-humouredly photographed. The clutch of the expressive hands, the petulant half-turn, the abrupt start to walk, the curious, cynical glance, the grim laugh, and not only the well-known stage manner, but the quiet smile flickering round the corners of the parted lips, are all touched with the happiest audacity. The rest of the people who support the nonsensical play act earnestly enough, but all the interest centres on that spirit of graceful grotesqueness—Mr. "Adonis" Dixey, a downright "original," as French folk say.

I fancy there is an inartistic timidity in this tendency to Saxonise American art for our stage. In literature we have warmly welcomed Bret Harte, Artemus Ward, Colonel John Hay, and the rest of the "Far West" specialists; now let us have a real, unadulterated American drama or comedy, that we may, at all events, know what touches most nearly the feelings and fancies of our cousins over the water. We have welcomed their capital players; we wait for the play.

W. C. K. Wilde.

Our Omnibus-Box.

I have no idea who Mr. Byron McGuiness may be. In all probability there is no such person, and that this false name is attached to the Royalty programme in order to divert attention from the so-called humourist who has been guilty of the impertinence called "Mephisto." Mr. E. J. Henley, however, stands arraigned for an act as discourteous as it is characterised by deplorable want of taste. The trumpery burlesque that has been produced in order to insult Mr. Henry Irving and a body of patient, hard-working, and honourable gentlemen is to my mind wholly spiteful and unquestionably malicious. It is quite possible to burlesque the Lyceum version of "Faust" without offence, and to parody Mr. Irving's "Mephisto" without descending to personality and vulgarity. Mr. Burnand's parody was cheerful, genial, and full of humour. Mr Toole's "Mephisto" could not under any circumstances be distorted by unkindness. In Mr. Dixey's wonderful imitation of Henry Irving I

can trace no offence whatever. The manner of the actor is brought forward not to be ridiculed but to be imitated. On the other hand, Mr. Henley's imitation is wholly disfigured by unkindness and ill-disguised spitefulness. It is a fit accompaniment to the wretched doggerel that it introduces. For "Mephisto" burlesques, parodies, travesties nothing in the wide world. It has been planned and produced apparently for the sole purpose of insulting Mr. Irving, and libelling the public writers who have had the privilege of describing, point by point and step by step, the career of the first of English artists, one who has done more for the stage than any actor of his time. I shall be told that Mr. Henley is not responsible for the folly of Mr. Byron McGuiness. He is directly responsible for this author's vulgarity and impertinence when he lends his countenance and influence to such a shabby show as this burlesque. Not only is Mr. Henley responsible, but so are all the other actors and actresses responsible who give their countenance to the programme put forward by the management of the Royalty Theatre. I should have thought that Mr. Henley and his companions would have been proud of an actor like Henry Irving. I should have thought the man and his career, his influence, his uprightness, and his high aims in the service of the drama would have saved him from this miserable yelping. Scurrilous journalists, disappointed and soured actors, cynical American writers who across the Atlantic never forgive their English failures, may ascribe Irving's success to prejudiced flattery and ill-concealed fraud. But men like this, whose opinions have no weight, and whose words have no character, are in a hopeless and miserable minority. The great public applaud Mr. Irving as an actor of exceptional attainment, and as a man of rare modesty and tact. The same public has endorsed every word written of Mr. Irving by men who too often waste their time and energy over the transactions of the modern stage in its baser and more degraded aspect. If Mr. Henley and his friends think that the task of criticism, or description of the daily record of the modern stage, is a pleasant one, he is very much mistaken. The mind of man is not improved by daily contact with imbecility, ignorance, and vanity such as is displayed in no other walk of life. The modern actor has been so be-puffed and be-praised that he turns round and rends his benefactor. There are instances of such ingratitude in lower ranks of nature. But it is a sorry circumstance when a young actor who has talent like Mr. Henley should lead a forlorn hope of ragged scribes, and rowdy writers, armed with hands full of mud to throw at a man who has done so much for the stage in every way as Mr. Henry Irving. The writers attacked can happily defend themselves, and are not likely to forget the scorn that some actors say they possess of undue publicity. They are likely to have their desire amply gratified in the future. The best way to punish an insult is to ignore the man who commits it. Meanwhile, I heartily agree with the remarks of a clever writer who has justly observed, "You can believe me when I say that some of the people who go in for this sort of satire would go down on their knees to any critic even of the most insignificant sort, who would write them a line of praise"! That is precisely my opinion. The auto-

biography of a dramatic critic has yet to be written, illustrated by original letters and correspondence. The material one day may be forthcoming.

I must return to my interesting friend in the "Brighton Guardian" who still stoutly maintains that "morality has been outraged" and that "poetical justice" has not been satisfied in the character of Captain Walter Leigh in the play called "Sister Mary." I may, perhaps, be permitted to differ with my Brighton critic, and with some justice, in that I know Walter Leigh and he does not. Walter Leigh is a particular friend of mine. I know him by heart. I understand every sentiment he utters, and I am perfectly certain that it is unjust and untrue to call him "a blackguard," as unjust and untrue as it is to say that he is "courted and flattered," whilst the woman he has ruined is "unmercifully ostracised." My friend in Brighton rushes off at a tangent, and has not properly studied the idea or the construction of "Sister Mary." There is one point he has evidently not noticed, and in this he is not particular. The peculiarity in the construction of "Sister Mary" that has as yet escaped the notice o every critic is this: that although the story deals with the life-sorrow of a woman caused by a man's recklessness, though they are both continually on the stage, yet from one end of the play to the other *they never meet.* On the wedding morning, when Walter Leigh is to be married to Mary Lisle, he is as ignorant of the existence of Rose Read, he has as absolutely forgotten her and the old romance as if it had never occurred, We, the audience, have heard Rose Read's story. We have listened to her pitiful tale. We have seen her tears, and witnessed her anguish, but Walter Leigh has been kept in absolute ignorance of the fate of Rose until the dramatic crash comes that is to ruin her life for ever. On the wedding morning Walter Leigh's bride asks him candidly to tell her if there is anything in his past life that ought to separate them. It is an anxious question at such a time. He hesitates for a moment, and says, from his point of view, quite truthfully, "No." To say that at this moment he utters deliberately and solemnly the foulest of lies is wholly to misunderstand the purpose of the play. Walter Leigh at this moment does not know what the audience know. He is in absolute ignorance of what has occurred. The audience is in the secret. He is in the dark. He knows that years ago he has used his power unfairly on a weak and innocent girl who has vanished out of his life, and that is all. He does not know that Rose Read had ever suffered socially. He does not know that a child was ever born to him.

The woman has suffered nobly and silently apart. She never appealed to the father of her child. He never discovered her whereabouts. She never approached him or went near him she hid her sorrow in her own heart, and has hitherto breathed

her buried secret to no human being except to "Sister Mary." Until "Sister Mary" knows who Rose Read's lover was, and confronts him with the portrait of his forgotten love, Walter Leigh knows absolutely nothing of the misery he has caused. His punishment comes when the truth is told. How, then, can it be said that he "utters deliberately and solemnly the foulest of lies?" He does nothing of the kind. If he knew that he was the father of an illegitimate child, that the woman he had ruined was the friend of "Sister Mary," that she had endured agony in consequence of his folly, then, indeed, he would be a reprobate; but the object of this play is to show how women bear in bitter silence the whole punishment for a mad act of folly. "The man laughs and rides away." I don't excuse the recklessness of Leigh's early life at the barracks when the mischief was done that stained the life of Rose Read for ever, but if a woman hides her shame from the man who has caused it he can hardly be called a "foul liar" for not confessing what he really does not know. When Leigh first sees "Sister Mary" he does not know of the existence of Rose Read. It was a dead and forgotten romance, the end of which he never knew. When he proposes to "Sister Mary" neither knows that Rose is to be the destiny that is to separate them. On the wedding morning *neither* knows that Rose is hovering round the church door like a shadow of fate!

The interest of the play is carefully worked up by progressive stages to the very point which my Brighton friend has been wholly unable to see. I cannot for the life of me see the "hypocritical glibness of a customary reprobate" in Walter Leigh. A less hypocritical and more generous man I, for my part, have never met. His candour is his strong point—not his deception. Let my Brighton friend study Walter Leigh again, and remember that after that wild act of folly at the barracks he has never seen or heard of the woman he has injured. It is not until "Sister Mary" shows him the portrait that the face of Rose Read arises to his recollection. Long before that he has told his bride that he knows of nothing that should prevent their marriage; and when he says that he tells the truth, for he does know nothing. If brides were all so indiscreet as to put such questions to bridegrooms on their wedding morning there would be no marriages at all. Walter Leigh does not stifle his conscience with a "white lie," remembering Rose Read, but he "denies her thrice," having utterly forgotten her. I repeat that Walter Leigh's virtue is "not oppressive." But he is no canting hypocrite who poses as a hero. He is a real, genuine, flesh-and-blood man, and I cannot see how morality or poetical justice have been outraged by a character that both men and women ought to understand.

However, he is coming with "Sister Mary" to the Comedy Theatre

"Nobody understands Freddy but me."

THE PICKPOCKET.

Cissy Grahame

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263, OXFORD STREET, W.

in the autumn, and the London playgoers will be able to judge if my estimate of Captain Walter Leigh is more correct than that of my Brighton friend.

"Save me from my friends." Of the male sex, of course. But I should have thought that Mr. Barrett might have dispensed with the gratuitous defence put forward on his behalf by a "Mr. Landesbury," whoever that gentleman may be. For Mr. Landesbury's communication to the theatrical world is disfigured by the worst of all possible faults in one who professes to state facts—reckless inaccuracy. No one who knows Mr. Wilson Barrett would for one instant suppose that a man who could construct so well, or write so well—as these columns have often testified—would be mean enough to put his name to work which he had not done, or would unfairly claim the rights of authorship that are due to him. I can most fully endorse all that such writers as Mr. Wills and Mr. Grundy have urged as to Mr. Barrett's remarkable skill, invention, and ready enthusiasm in his work. But it does not concern the public as to what exact share one of two or three men have had in the building up of any particular play. It is sufficient when their names are attached to a play that they are honourably and mutually entitled to recognition. Only men of very small and jealous natures would care to cavil over their individual share of a successful work. They each know what they have done, and that is enough. But nobody surely wants the intrusive and uncalled-for evidence of men like Mr. Landesbury, who professes to discuss a subject on which he is profoundly ignorant. He has stepped forward to tell those who are interested in theatrical tittle-tattle exactly what share Mr. Wilson Barrett had in the composition of "Sister Mary." Mr. Landesbury's evidence is worthless. There are only two men living who know how the preparation of "Sister Mary" for the stage was divided. Neither of those men, strange to say, is Mr. Landesbury. It is quite true that Mr. Wilson Barrett many years ago wrote a two-act drama which was subsequently elaborated into the four-act "Sister Mary." It is quite true that Mr. Barrett's share in the work was invaluable, but, my dear Mr. Landesbury, it does not follow from this that the idea, the scheme, or the style of this valuable two-act drama were wholly followed in "Sister Mary." It concerns nobody. The evidence is in existence, but it is not and never was in the possession of Mr. Landesbury, of whom I never heard until he came forward to discuss a subject of which he actually knows nothing.

Miss Cissy Grahame, whose photograph appears in this number, was born on April 10, 1862. She made her first appearance on the stage at the Theatre Royal, Hull, in 1875, under the management of Mr. Wilson Barrett. She next acted under the direction of Mr. Sefton Parry, and, at Edinburgh, under that of Mr. J. B. Howard. Her first important part was that of Adrienne, in the production of "Proof" at Brighton, on April 20, 1878. She was next engaged by Mr. Hare for the Court Theatre, where she made her first London

appearance, on January 4, 1879, as Lucy Franklin in "A Scrap of Paper," afterwards acting, at the same theatre, Léonie in "The Ladies' Battle" and Florence Dalston in Mr. Val Prinsep's comedietta "Cousin Dick." A provincial tour with Mr. and Mrs. Kendal was followed by an engagement at the St. James's Theatre, where she acted Marguerite in "Monsieur le Duc" and Mrs. Mildmay in "Still Waters Run Deep." In August, 1880, she played Nichette in "Heartsease," and the Duchess d'Allmont in "Adrienne Lecouvreur" during an engagement of Madame Modjeska at Liverpool. Returning to London, she appeared as Margaret Curll in the production of "Mary Stuart" at the Court Theatre; and, at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, she played, on November 1, 1880, Lise in "Annie-Mie." At the same theatre, on February 2 of the year following, she acted Nellie in "The Colonel," a part which she sustained during almost the whole of the long run of Mr. Burnand's play. At the Haymarket Theatre, on April 25, 1882, she acted Eva Trevene in the production of the English version of "Odette." Then came a long engagement under the direction of Mr. Wilson Barrett, in the course of which she acted Bess Marks in "The Lights o' London," Nellie Denver in "The Silver King," and Almida in "Claudian," in the provinces. Her next appearance in London was made at the Vaudeville Theatre on September 25, 1884, when she appeared as the heroine in "Saints and Sinners." At the same theatre she subsequently acted Caroline Fareham in "Under Fire" and Myra Cayley in "Open House." She was next engaged by Mr. Hawtrey for a brief season at Her Majesty's Theatre, and then at the Globe, where she opened on April 24 last, playing Mrs. Hope in "The Pickpocket," in which character she has been specially photographed for this magazine. At the same theatre, on the 19th of last month, she made a hit by her charming portrayal of the heroine in Mr. Jerome K. Jerome's pretty little play "Barbara." Miss Grahame, it may be added, is one of the most intelligent, able, and graceful of our young actresses.

Mr. Yorke Stephens, whose portrait also appears in this number, made his first professional appearance at the Olympic Theatre in July, 1879, in "The Worship of Bacchus." After an engagement at the Royalty Theatre, where he played in "Midge," under the direction of Miss Jennie Lee, he was engaged by the late Miss Litton to speak the First Lord's speeches in the revival of "As You Like It" at the Imperial Theatre in February, 1880. In Miss Litton's provincial tour he played such parts as Falkland in "The Rivals" and Hastings in "She Stoops to Conquer." On the retirement of Mr. Kyrle Bellew from the company, he succeeded him as Orlando, and in Miss Litton's revival of "The Country Girl" at the Gaiety, in 1881, he was the Belville. He then went on tour again with Miss Litton, in the course of which he appeared as Joseph Surface at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow. A short season at the Court Theatre was followed

"My motto is slow and sure; hard
to get, but safe to come."
ON CHANGE.

Yorke Stephens

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263, OXFORD STREET, W.

by an engagement as leading juvenile man with the late John McCullough in America. After acting for two years under the Madison Square Theatre management, and at Daly's Theatre, New York, he returned to England. He acted Gilbert Vaughan in the first tour of "Called Back," on the conclusion of which he was engaged for the Vaudeville Theatre, where he remained a year, playing Captain Fanshawe in "Saints and Sinners," Hon. Claude Doyle in "Under Fire," Mr. Cayley in "Open House," &c. He was next engaged for the part of Joseph Johnson in "On 'Change,' a part which he acted during the long run of that play.

A *matinée* at the Criterion on June 15 introduced us to a young actress of whom it is permissible to have high hopes in the future. Miss Janet Achurch, who appeared in "A Gay Husband," an adaptation of a piece of Octave Feuillet's, which has, we believe, never been played in France, is a lady with a graceful figure, singularly expressive face, sympathetic voice, and an undeniable aptitude for the highest stage work. In certain situations in the piece she played with an emotional power very rare even among actresses who have had a long experience of the boards, and she can *listen* intelligently, a matter by no means so much attended to as it should be. She should beware, however, of trying to show, as it were, too many conflicting emotions on her face at once. By all means give thought due facial expression; but periods of comparative repose are necessary, in order to gain the requisite dramatic contrast. Taken as a whole, Miss Achurch's performance was a remarkable one, and managers on the look-out for a leading lady should not forget this clever young actress. The piece is interesting, but unpleasant, like so many French plays of its class, and the adaptation is rather crudely done. The performance, it may be noted, was witnessed by Miss Ellen Terry, Mrs. Kendal, and Mrs. Bancroft, a jury fully competent to decide upon Miss Achurch's claims to histrionic honours, but their presence must, we fancy, have made the young lady rather nervous.

An adaptation of "Les Vieux Garçons," by Sardou, from the pen of Mr. James Mortimer, was produced at the Gaiety on the afternoon of June 16. The adaptation, which is well done, was given at the Haymarket some six years ago, under the title of "Reclaimed." It is an interesting piece, but too "talky," like a great deal of Sardou's work, and needs compression. That supplied, it should suit a theatre like the St. James's. Mr. Beerbohm-Tree played a reformed rake very cleverly, and Mr. Royce gave a remarkable picture of an old *roué* who dotes on a music-hall siren, who deserts him. Miss Lydia Cowell played that young lady with much spirit and humour, giving us a bit of character acting of high excellence. Miss Measor, too, must be credited with a singularly winning and fresh performance

of the artless heroine. The *matinée* was for the benefit of the Mansion House Hospital Sunday Fund, and was under the immediate patronage of the Lord Mayor.

Mr. Alexander Watson's second dramatic recital, given at Steinway Hall on May 26, proved as successful as the first. The opening item, however, was not good. "Keenean's Charge," an American piece, was delivered by Mr. Watson in an affected manner, which I was sorry to notice, but no trace of this remained during the rest of the evening. Mrs. Alexander's "Burial of Moses" is better suited to private reading than to recitation; but "The Newsboy's Debt" is touching and affecting, and was done full justice to by the reciter. "The Hat," translated from the French, is a clever piece, and showed Mr. Watson to advantage; the points were brought on in a quiet, but most telling manner. C. Collins's most amusing, because so true, "Our Eye-witness on the Ice" and Mark Twain's "European Guides" were given with a thorough appreciation of the authors' humour, the latter especially showing the reciter in his best comic vein. But the great hit of the evening was "An Ocean Waif," founded on an incident which appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* some years back. The author modestly hides himself under the shelter of "Anon.," but he has done his work well. An interesting story is told in language that is both pathetic and humorous, showing a good descriptive power. Mr. Watson's interpretation is admirable, and I do not hesitate to pronounce it his best achievement. The piece is long, but Mr. Watson holds his audience in his grasp, provoking tears or laughter at will, and keeping them interested to the very end. The pathos and quaintness of his delivery deserve the highest praise, and I congratulate him on having secured a piece which is so good and so well suited to his style. Mr. Watson was warmly applauded.

Mr. John L. Child's annual series of dramatic recitals at St. George's Hall proved as successful as usual. The musical element was represented by Madame Clara Samuell, Miss Marian Helmore, Mr. Maybrick, Mr. J. Andersen Clarke, and Mr. F. W. Bampfylde, all of whom found favour with the audience. Mr. Child began his first recital on the afternoon of May 5 in a most effective manner. The piece selected, Southey's "Lord William," is in itself most impressive; it was delivered with great dramatic intensity and power, and it proves a valuable addition to Mr. Child's repertory. The same may be said of "The Uncle," Mr. Child's interpretation of which is forcible and thrilling. "A Night with a Stork" was, I believe, also attempted for the first time, and successfully. The second act of "Hamlet" was rather disappointing to those who have heard Mr. Child's "Macbeth," but the speech commencing "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I," was finely spoken. "The Story of the Faithful Soul" and "My First and Last Appearance" were given with Mr. Child's usual excellence. The second recital, on the evening of May 22, comprised the following items:—Edmund Ollier's "Fairy Tale for Elderly

Children," a well-written piece, well rendered; "The Building of St. Sophia," which showed Mr. Child's great descriptive power at his very best. "The Four Idiot Brothers" and "The Fall of Wolsey" ("Henry VIII.") were also good; the latter was delivered with dignity and feeling, but would be improved if the reciter infused more bitterness in his tone. Three pieces added to Mr. Child's repertory since last year are: Mark Twain's "Cure for a Cold," given with quiet humour, the assumed American accent being good, and not overdone; "Sheltered," an American piece, delivered with great feeling; and "The Charity Dinner," one of those comic pieces which fit Mr. Child like a glove, and keep the audience in roars of laughter. The first part of the third recital (June 2, in the afternoon) was composed of the three chapters of "Nicholas Nickleby" treating of Dotheboy's Hall. Mr. Child is always a good interpreter of Dickens, and on this occasion the only exception one could take to his reading was that his Squeers was hardly enough of a bully; Mr. Child excels in genial parts, and perhaps unknowingly he has "rubbed off the corners" of the man's brutality. His Smike was admirable, touchingly pathetic, simple, and natural. The Graveyard scene from "Hamlet" was the very best of Mr. Child's selections from Shakespeare during this series; his Hamlet showed refinement and fire; his First Gravedigger was a perfect bit of "character acting." "The Baron's Last Banquet" and Mark Twain's "European Guides" were also in the programme, the latter given in a quaint, humorous style that was very good. In the second part, "Fire! Fire!" by Marie de Mensiaux, was recited for the first time in public. This is a dramatic and excellently written piece, admirably adapted for recitation, and should become better known. Mr. Child's interpretation was excellent; full of pathos, it was both tender and powerful; his earnestness had the true ring in it, and gained him a recall.

For the closing recital of the series (June 19), Acts I. and III. of "Hamlet" were given in costume, Mr. Child being supported by members of the Irving D. C., of which he is Vice-President. Mr. John Pullman's excellent elocution shone forth in the speech of the Ghost, delivered with much dignity. Mr. Arthur Ayers was very good as Polonius, and Mr. Benjamin Webster and Mr. Louis Raymond rendered good service as Laertes and Claudius respectively. Mr. Child's Hamlet was a surprise; his first selection had been slightly disappointing, and had not prepared one for such an excellent display of histrionic power. His reading of the part is good and true; the settled look of weariness on his face during the earlier scenes, and his tenderness in speaking to Ophelia, are well contrasted with his flashes of anger. The soliloquy, "To be or not to be," was excellently rendered, from the very simplicity of the delivery. The closet scene was also very good, but Mr. Child's triumph is undoubtedly the play scene; his eager watching of the King as the play proceeds, the growing excitement of his tone as he explains the argument, crawling nearer and nearer to Claudius, and his mad shout of triumph

as the guilty man takes flight—all this was wrought with the greatest artistic skill, and almost makes one regret that Mr. Child has quitted the stage for the platform. The deserved success of this performance will greatly add to his reputation. His impersonation shows the most careful study; the advice to the players was not only well delivered by him, but acted upon throughout the evening.

Mdme. Puzzi's annual concert, always one of the most interesting of the season, took place on May 31, St. George's Hall being crowded, as usual on these occasions. One of the striking features of the afternoon was Mdlle. Marie Marimon's reappearance in this country after two years' absence. She was in excellent voice, and her perfect vocalisation has lost none of its remarkable flexibility; she was encored in the aria from "Il Flauto Magico," and was equally successful in her second solo, "L'Abeille," by Massé. Mdme. Trebelli was greeted enthusiastically, singing with exquisite charm the gavotte from "Mignon," originally composed for her, reaping a double recall. Mdlle. Antoinette Trebelli sang the shadow song from "Dinorah" with a facility and finish which are the outcome of a good method and sound training. This young lady has now been before the English public for nearly a year, and has fulfilled all the rich promises of her *début;* she has moreover gained much in expression and in grace of manner. Another young singer who has made rapid strides is Mr. Ben Davies, who showed both power and expression on this occasion. Mr. Shakespeare sang "Adelaide" with his usual taste and finish.

Books on the human voice are numberless. They pour in upon us from specialists and quidnuncs. They are alarming as they are amusing. It makes one husky to read some and hurrah to peruse others. One of the best, as it is the most convincingly written, is by that eminent authority, Dr. Morell Mackenzie. It is called "The Hygiene of the Vocal Organs" (Macmillan and Co.). I am pleased to observe that Dr. Mackenzie, like a sensible man, advocates moderation, not abstinence. He does not tell us that we shall be speechless if we drink a glass of wine, or voiceless if we dare to smoke a cigar. We may enjoy our little pleasures, but we must not take them with too much enthusiasm. Underneath the practical hints and scientific facts will be found a pleasant vein of cynicism and genial common sense characteristic of the writer.

It becomes once more necessary to repeat for the thousandth time that no payment is or ever has been demanded from any actor or actress for the publication of their pictures in this magazine. The only payment given is one of thanks from the conductors of the periodical to Mr. Herbert Barraud, the photographic artist, for taking the pictures, and to the

subjects for taking the trouble to sit. This explanation becomes necessary in consequence of some utterly untrustworthy remarks made in an American theatrical journal which professes to know something about London journalism, but whose strictures are discoloured by the animosity engendered by an old feud that ought to have been forgotten years ago

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New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from May 18 to June 22, 1886 :—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

London :

May 20 "Houp La ! Tra, La, La !" Comedietta, in one act, by H. Mainwaring Dunstan ; adapted from the German. Royalty Theatre.

,, ,, "The Esmondes of Virginia." Domestic drama, in four acts. Royalty Theatre.

,, 21 "Hand and Heart." New and original play, in one act, by W. Yardley and H. P. Stephens. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, 25 "The Wife's Sacrifice." Drama, in five acts ; adapted from the French by Sydney Grundy and Sutherland Edwards. St. James's Theatre.

,, 27 "A Night Off." Eccentric comedy, in four acts ; founded by Augustin Daly on a German piece by Frank Von Schonthan. Strand Theatre. (First time in England.)

,, 29* "Wild Oats." O'Keefe's comedy. Criterion Theatre.

,, ,, "Our Strategists." An American farcical piece. Opéra Comique. (First time in England.)

,, 31 "Adonis." American burlesque, in two acts, by Gill and Dixey. (First time in England.)

June 11 "Mehalah ; or, the Power of Will." Romantic drama, in five acts, adapted by W. Poel and W. H. G. Palmer. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

June 12 "The Palace of Pearl." Musical spectacular extravaganza, written by William Younge and Alfred Murray ; music by Jakobowski and Stanislaus. Empire Theatre.

,, 14 "Jack." Comedy, in four acts. Royalty Theatre.

,, ,, "Mephisto." "Burlesque," in one act. Royalty Theatre.

,, 15 "A Gay Husband." Drama, in three acts ; adapted from the French of Octave Feuillet. Criterion Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, ,, "Take Back the Heart." "A mysterious incident," in one act. Criterion Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, 16 "Old Sinners." Comedy, in four acts ; adapted from the French of Sardou by James Mortimer. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, 18 "The Confidential Clerk." Farcical comedy, in three acts ; adapted from the German. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, 19 "Barbara." New play, in one act, by Jerome K. Jerome. Globe Theatre.

,, 23 "Mischief." New and original comedy, in three acts, by Cunningham Bridgman. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

PROVINCES:

May 24 "Carpio." New romantic play, by John Finnamore. Prince's Theatre, Bradford.

June 3 "The Alps." Farcical comedy, in three acts; adapted from the French. Theatre Royal, Cambridge.

,, 8 "By Land and Sea!" New and original drama, in five acts, by J. R. Campbell and J. L. Shine. Theatre Royal, Birmingham.

,, 9 "Innocents All Abroad." Original operatic absurdity; libretto by A. L. Clarke; music by John Gregory. Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

,, 14 "Blackberries." Comedy-drama, in one act, by Mark Melford. Prince of Wales, Liverpool.

,, ,, "The Jones's Notes." New and original farcical comedy, in three acts, by Joseph Tabrar. Theatre Royal, Bournemouth.

,, ,, "The Great Tom-Tom." New comic opera, written by Butler Stanhope; music arranged and composed by J. R. Reid. Theatre Royal, Birkenhead.

PARIS:

May 24* "L'Arlésienne," in five acts, music by Mendelssohn. Odéon.

,, 24* "Le Fruit Défendu," comedy, in four acts, by Camille Doucet. Théâtre Français.

,, 31 "Brahma," ballet, in three acts and nine tableaux, by M. Monplaisir; music by M. Dallargine. Eden.

,, 31 Prestidigitation, by M. de Kolta. Eden.

June 1 Appearance of Krao, the "Missing Link." Alcazar d'Eté.

,, 1* "Cadet, Roussel, Dumollet, Gribouille, et Compagnie," a sketch, in three acts, by MM. Clairville and Jules Cordier. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 1 "Les Petits Moyens," comedy-vaudeville, in one act, by MM. Labiche, Gustave Lemoine, and Adrien Decourcelle. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 6 "Visite à Corneille," à propos in verse, by M. Emile Blémont. Théâtre Français.

,, 6 "La Lettre du Cardinal," comedy, in one act, by MM. Georges Bertal and René Lafon. Odéon.

,, 10* "Le Trouvère," opera, by Verdi. Château d'Eau.

,, 12* "La Traviata," opera, in four acts, libretto by M. Duprez; music by Verdi. Opéra Comique.

,, 14* "Le Médicin malgré lui," comedy, in three acts, by Molière. Odéon.

,, 14* "Polyeucte," tragedy, in five acts, by Corneille. Odéon.

,, 18* "Pierre le Noir ou les Chauffeurs," drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by MM. Dinaux and Eugène Suë. Ambigu.

THE THEATRE.

Samuel Phelps.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By Richard Lee.

PAINTING, sculpture, music, literature—all the refining arts, save one—appeal for judgment through their products to the verdict of the future. Acting—

> The youngest of the sister arts
> Where all their beauty blends—

having no real existence beyond the passing moment of its creation, dies even as it is born. The sole appeal therefore of the stage player regarding his vivid but necessarily evanescent impersonations is to the judgment of contemporaries who actually witness bodied forth upon the stage his living illustrations of the dramatist's conception. If, then, these ephemeral humanities of fancy are to survive the fleeting reality of histrionic assumption, it must follow that the actor of all artists should find a chronicler of his individual characteristics while still exercising them; or, failing that, before the vivid reflex of his counterfeit presentments becomes dim and faded in the mirror of memory. But merely to view these presentments on the surface is not enough; they must be seen with the mind's eye as well as that of the body by the spectator who would justly appraise the player's artistic quality; a descriminative introspection of whose motives as well as methods is requisite in order to pluck the heart out of his mystery. It should moreover be borne in mind by the stage biographer that of all artists the actor is the only one wholly dependent upon his critics for posthumous interpretation, forasmuch as, his career once ended, no appeal is possible from their judgment to his work—

> Urgentur ignotique longa
> Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

The following record faithfully set down in the spirit of these remarks traces the artistic career of one who, without disparagement to the new school of refined, earnest, and intellectual histrions happily adorning our stage, may be justly distinguished as the last typical classic actor of the English theatre.

Samuel Phelps was born in 1806, at Devonport, where his father carried on business as a wine merchant. Under the fostering tuition of Dr. Reece, Head Master of Saltash Grammar School, the boy received the seeds of the sound learning which the man by an unremitting habit of study never ceased throughout his long life to ripen and fructify. As his schoolmate the lad found a congenial companion in his younger brother Robert, better known as Dr. Phelps, for over a quarter-century Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and at one period Vice-Chancellor of his University. *En passant* it is noteworthy how honourably the Church and the Stage, the twin exponents of religion and morality, were linked and represented through the dutiful and laborious lives of these distinguished brothers.

On quitting school Samuel Phelps, impatient of the intellectual restraint of provincial life, turned his back on Devonport and came up to the aspiring countryman's El Dorado, London, to seek his fortune, and, as the issue proved, to found his fame. Pending an opportunity for the practical development of the strong histrionic instinct which possessed him, young Phelps took present service as "reader" at a printing office in a court off Lombard Street, upon the site of what afterwards became the City Bankers' Clearing House. By a curious coincidence the printer's foreman was none other than Douglas Jerrold, afterwards eminent in the triple capacity of wit, journalist, and dramatist.

While with manly independence still doing the work which came to his hand wherewith to supply the needs of present subsistence, the printer's reader never ceased to strive after the practical means of following the artistic bent of his inclination; for it was at this time, while still in his teens, that he entered upon his histrionic probation by acting as an amateur at a private playhouse then standing in Rawstone Street, Clerkenwell. There, by strange fortune, within bowshot of the theatre afterwards identified with his brightest work, the young aspirant made his first appearance before a British audience, enacting on the occasion in question a minor character in "Monk" Lewis's sensational

melo-drama, "The Castle Spectre." Drawn to each other by the elevated tastes and intelligence possessed by them in common, young Phelps, taking heart of grace, invited his foreman to see him act. Jerrold accordingly went; sat himself down fronting the little stage in Rawstone Street, and saw the performance. Nothing, if not critical, the future dramatist pronounced a judgment upon the tyro-player which the subject of his criticism, when years after he had attained to the leadership of his profession, loved to quote *ipsissima verba*:—"Jerrold told me that by dint of hard study, luck, and patience I might in time act well enough to get thirty shillings a week;" "and," added the old actor with a grim smile, "Jerrold was right; I *have* got thirty shillings a week."

Acquiring facility and experience by frequent practice as an amateur, young Phelps, while yet upon the threshold of man's estate, displayed the courage of his ambition by turning his back at once and for ever upon the Lombard Street printing office, and graduating as a professional actor. This occurred at the Queen's Theatre, as then styled, in Tottenham Court Road; years afterwards rendered famous by its late manageress, Mrs. Bancroft, under the name of the Prince of Wales's. There, in his twenty-first year, A.D. 1827, Samuel Phelps first appeared on the public stage as Captain Galliard in the farce of "XYZ." Although the part was, in theatrical parlance, that of "walking gentleman," the favourable impression created by the tyro's acting and personality secured for him a second engagement immediately after the expiration of the first as a member of the stock company of what was then known as the York Circuit. Under these auspices Phelps appeared at the Pontefract Theatre in 1828, and at once gave such satisfaction to the audience as induced the manager, with a shrewd eye to his own interests, to promote the young actor *per saltum* to "leading business," by casting him within the brief space of a fortnight from his opening night for the important character of Joseph Surface in "The School for Scandal."

Fully justifying as a principal the favourable anticipations he had raised as a subordinate, Phelps rapidly became a recognised stage favourite throughout the North of England, in Scotland, and, across St. George's Channel, at Belfast and Londonderry. At the principal theatres of these districts he was welcomed both in comedy and tragedy, more particularly in the rôles of testy old men and miserly money grubs long after identified with his name.

Broadening and at the same time refining his powers of delineation by ceaseless study, pursued in faithful recognition of the principle that an artist can have no such rival in his art as a due sense of its claims, Phelps thus continued in the prosperous exercise of his profession for nine years.

At the close of this period the still youthful actor, applying, it would seem, to himself the question of the Crookback as to his officer's whereabouts—

> What do they in the North
> When they should serve their sovereign in the West?

deemed it expedient to change the venue of his histrionic operations from York to Devon. Migrating without halt in London, Phelps appeared at the Exeter Theatre in 1837, where the Southrons were immediately enlisted in his favour as warmly as those just left behind him in the North. Each successive night he played at Exeter proved to the uttermost penny how much money the theatre could hold. Prosperity crowned his efforts, as the managers found to their advantage, while he won for both them and himself not only golden opinions but metal more solid.

With a reputation thus established and confirmed as a sound Shakespearean actor, possessed of the rare magnetic sympathy which attracts and enthrals audiences, it was no marvel that the provincial celebrity of Samuel Phelps should reach the ears of the Metropolitan managers, at whose head Macready for the first time was about to place himself. On the eve of his memorable endeavour to revive the national drama at Covent Garden he, in laudable anxiety to secure the highest acting talent in the country, journeyed down to Southampton that he might judge for himself as to the truth of the pæan of praise sung to the rising star. One visit to the theatre sufficed. At the close of the performance Macready was introduced to Phelps, who, as the result of their interview, agreed to join the distinguished company of actors then in course of enlistment for the approaching managerial campaign at Covent Garden. A misunderstanding, however, in respect of this unwritten engagement causing Phelps to regard it as null and void, he considered himself free to accept an offer from Webster to appear forthwith at the Haymarket, where, in due course, he enacted Shylock as his opening impersonation. The following characteristic record of the event is found in Macready's diary, under the date of the 29th of August, 1837:—"Sent for 'The

Morning Herald,' and read the account of Mr. Phelps's appearance, which seems to me a decided success. It depressed my spirits, though perhaps it should not do so. If he is greatly successful I shall reap the profits; if moderately, he will strengthen my company. But an actor's fame and his dependent income are so precarious that we start at every shadow of an actor. It is an unhappy life." The assumption of Shylock was followed in rapid succession by those of Hamlet, Richard III., and Sir Edward Mortimer. These arduous test characters were sustained by the young actor with such pronounced success as induced Macready to clinch anew his half-lapsed engagement. The second negotiation proving satisfactory, and his covenant with Benjamin Webster being duly fulfilled, Phelps in the course of the same year, 1837, made his *début* at Covent Garden in Otway's "Venice Preserved" as Jaffier to the Pierre of Macready. The approval, exhibited alike by press and public regarding this initial performance, emboldened Macready to cast Phelps for Othello, he himself representing the unsympathetic character of Iago. No sincerer tribute than this to the ability of an avowed rival could be given, bearing in mind how morbidly jealous Macready was as an actor, while, as a manager, ambitious of maintaining on his own stage the high standard of histrionic excellence to which he had publicly pledged himself.

On Macready's relinquishment of the lesseeship of Covent Garden for that of Drury Lane, Phelps, still continuing a member of the company, removed from the one patent theatre to the other. Soon after this change of venue Charles Dickens, whose fondness for the drama and its expositors would have made of him a great actor, had literature not already claimed him for her own as a great novelist, had introduced to the notice of Macready Mr. Robert Browning's noble play, "The Blot on the 'Scutcheon," with a view to the production of the piece and the impersonation of its hero by the manager. Macready, as it fell out, deferred for so unconscionably long a time giving a decision as to whether he himself would act in "The Blot on the 'Scutcheon" that the eager novelist, impatient at the delay, proposed, with the author's good will, that Phelps should play its principal personage. The manager assented; and with this cast, which also included Miss Helen Faucit and Mr. James Anderson, Mr. Browning's tragedy was rehearsed and repre-

sented. Though its success was undoubted, "The Blot on the 'Scutcheon," for reasons never publicly stated, disappeared from the bills after the third representation. But for all that Mr. Browning's tragedy was played long enough and often enough to convince the critical public that they had before them a sterling actor capable of sustaining characters conceived and cast in the highest dramatic mould.

At Drury Lane the mettle of Phelps was further attested by his embodiment of a long gallery of the familiar personages animating the legitimate drama of England, including Hubert in "King John," Macduff, Kent in "King Lear," Leonatus Posthumus, and Cassius. He also impersonated, in plays previously unacted, the monk Joseph in "Richelieu," and Captain Channel in "The Prisoner of War." When Macready's commission was given for the last-named drama, with special instructions to fit Phelps in the leading character, Douglas Jerrold must have had poignantly recalled to his literary conscience as a humbling rebuke to his early pride of judgment the disparaging valuation he had set upon the stage talent possessed by his old companion of the printing office. However, by investing Phelps with a character so sterling as Captain Channel the dramatist virtually made amends to the actor for having once appraised his quality at thirty shillings a week.

Macready's meritorious endeavour to re-establish the higher native drama as an abiding institution of the metropolis would probably have resulted in success at Drury Lane but for the unhappy greed of its proprietary. Finding that the theatre, popularised by the artistic liberality of its management, was beginning, in however slight a degree, to be remunerative, the shareholders, at the termination of Macready's second season, declined to renew his lease except at a very exorbitant advance in the rent. Unable, with the remotest prospect of success, to comply with these augmented terms, Macready reluctantly withdrew from management, thereby causing his double company of tragedians and comedians—the finest histrionic confederacy ever brought together upon the stage of an English theatre—to be dispersed, never in its pristine strength to re-unite. Lovers of the national drama, grown to believe it had at last found a local habitation worthy of its quality, were in despair at seeing Thalia and Melpomene once again turned ruthlessly out of house and home. The despondence of

playgoers was the deeper, forasmuch as they found themselves to be but a seemingly hopeless minority of the public; for, paradoxical as it appears, it is nevertheless true, at the period in question, that during the current half century, when the histrionic ability of the British stage was at the highest level the popular interest in the theatre was at the lowest ebb. Dramatic entertainments, whether given in town or country, were then neither in fashion with the aristocracy nor in favour with the masses. Meagrely attended at the best, the theatres languished, while their managers for the most part went bankrupt, proving as the dismal result of stage enterprise at the time that the playhouse was the way to the workhouse.

With the drama thus stranded, Phelps, in common with the most gifted of his late colleagues, sought the professional employment in the provinces denied to him in London. But so bad had the times become for theatres that even upon his old ground up in the North his name, which used to witch audiences to the playhouse, lost its lure. As a discouraging consequence, Phelps and Mrs. Warner—lately the leading actress at Drury Lane—found themselves out of heart and pocket wending their way disconsolately back to London.

This lame and impotent conclusion forcibly illustrating the poet's faith-fraught line :—"Our seeming ills are blessings in disguise," occurred early in 1844 ; an eventful year, as it presently proved to the subject of this memoir.

Up to that date the suburban theatre of Sadler's Wells, standing on the bank of the New River, near the confines of Islington and Clerkenwell, had been for many years leased by Mr. T. L. Greenwood, grandson of the scenic artist who had designed and painted the scenery at the two patent houses for John Kemble. Greenwood, after keeping Sadler's Wells open through a series of years with varying fortunes as a minor theatre for the production of domestic drama and melo-drama, had, at the period referred to, for his partner in the management the once popular actor of eccentric characters, H. R. Honnor. At the close of 1843, however, the term of their tenure expired. Thereupon Greenwood sought right and left for a legitimate attraction of any kind which might warrant his undertaking a renewal of the lease. Prompted by a firm faith, which never left him, in the appreciative taste of the playgoing public, and with a prophetic prevision that success might be

achieved, even at a remote suburban playhouse, by the production of the higher drama worthily represented, he invited several of the leading stage favourites of his time, including Vandenhoff as a tragedian, and Mr. Walter Lacy as a comedian, to co-operate with him at Sadler's Wells. But one and all emphatically declined, timorous of the remote situation and the attendant risk; until, in the very nick of time, Macready's two ablest coadjutors happily introduced themselves to his notice. Frankly entertaining their proposition, he at first proposed that Sadler's Wells be rented by the trio under their conjoint lesseeship, but for urgent reasons this was impracticable. Ultimately Greenwood consented to take the entire responsibility, agreeing to receive Phelps and Mrs. Warner in consideration of their artistic services as his partners, severally to share, and share alike, with him whatever profits might accrue to their venture. His sole reservation in this covenant was, that in the event of the failure of their enterprise, he should have the option of terminating it by closing the theatre at *one week's notice.* This drastic clause in the contract attests the stern fact of the opening of Sadler's Wells at that time being, in the opinion of those most qualified to estimate the result, but a forlorn hope at best.

The French proverb, that nothing is certain but the unforeseen, received yet another confirmation of its truthfulness in the curious train of circumstances attending the re-opening of Sadler's Wells. Having regard to the antecedents of its two leading artists and the plays and characters identified with their reputations, it has been inferred naturally enough by dramatic *cognoscenti* that the memorable Phelps and Greenwood management was entered upon with the settled design and intention of representing the legitimate drama and nothing but the legitimate drama at Sadler's Wells. This belief, fostered and confirmed in the public mind by the classic entertainments given at the Islington playhouse through eighteen years, is, however, nothing less than a popular fallacy. That the matter may be made quite clear it will be necessary to hark back for a brief moment to the Macready management.

Even with its unexampled array of histrionic talent, and the superadded attraction of Bulwer's two new plays, "Richelieu" and "The Lady of Lyons," Drury Lane had been barely made to pay. Anxiously aware of this the new managers of Sadler's Wells naturally hesitated to follow an example which, however brilliant

and artistic, had virtually resulted in failure. Ignoring accordingly for the time being their Shakespearean experiences and aspirations, and taking shrewdly to heart the apposite professional epigram, "they who live to please, must please to live," Phelps and Mrs. Warner, in council with their partner, arrived at the conclusion that in their conjoint interest it would be best that Sadler's Wells as heretofore should re-open its doors to the public essentially as a theatre for the representation of melodrama.

This revelation, made after the secret has been so well kept—albeit known by a woman—will, no doubt, astonish many, and possibly displease a few. How it came about that, departing from their original design, the new management, suddenly shifting their ground, re-opened Sadler's Wells as a "legitimate" playhouse, is a story taken from the lips of Phelps himself, and now for the first time publicly told.

Directly their deed of agreement had been duly executed by the three partners it was concurrently settled that "The Tower of Nesle," a melo-drama adapted from the French, of a decidedly sensational character, should be their opening piece; with Phelps in the rôle of Buridon, Mrs. Warner playing the heroine. Further consideration of the subject, however, caused the managers to abandon this purpose; and for reasons, be it here recorded, redounding to their credit. Although by no means so repulsive in its plot as many another play since transferred from the French stage to our own, and received without demur by English audiences, it was considered that the subject of "The Tower of Nesle," regarded from the strictly ethical standpoint, was, to say the least of it, questionable, if not absolutely forbidding. That the piece had received the *imprimatur* of the official licensor of plays, that it had been played elsewhere, and, moreover, had paid elsewhere in England, sufficed not to satisfy the conscientious scruples of the Sadler's Wells triumvirate, to each of whom the panegyric of De La Bruyère may justly be applied:—"Il demande des hommes un plus grand et un plus rare succes que les louanges, et même que les récompenses, qui est de les rendre meilleurs." Trained to this elevation of duty in the school of Shakespeare and his congeners as at least two of the three had been in the exercise of their craft, it became nothing less than a moral law dominating their artistic being that whatever

they presented to the public, even though it were but melo-drama, must conform to the principles of dramatic purity wherein their taste was educated and upon which their judgment had been formed. Tried by this severe but wholesome standard "The Tower of Nesle," found to be tainted, was rejected *à outrance.*

Foregoing, from the honourable motives here cited the production of this revival, the partners thereupon determined to inaugurate their management with an original piece. A commission for a melo-drama was accordingly given to Mr. Zachary Barnett, a practised playwright, who, though his productions have been long since swept into the wallet which Time gives to oblivion, did service of a homely sort to the drama of his day. But the date of the opening night of Sadler's Wells, to which the management was pledged by the preliminary announcements already placarded over the town, now drew so near as to render it utterly impracticable to produce Mr. Barnett's play in time. Resolved at all hazards to keep faith with the public, a rigid rule of punctuality, never once relaxed by the new Sadler's Wells management, the partners, for no other reason than that they were left absolutely in the lurch for lack of a melo-drama, fell back upon Shakespeare; a fortunate alternative, as the issue proved, taken, as it undoubtedly was, not through choice but from sheer compulsion of necessity.

In this initial crisis, "Macbeth" was selected for presentation. Without novel accessories of any kind, and but very sparsely garnished with such stock scenery and costumes as were found in the theatre, the tragedy was hastily put in rehearsal. Changing front at the last moment, before their plan of action had as yet been confided to the public, the managers improved the occasion by issuing their annunciatory address in terms strictly accordant with their new arrangements, without a syllable through its text disclosing their surrendered plans. Here, *in extenso,* is the manifesto:—

"Mrs. Warner and Mr. Phelps have embarked in the management of Sadler's Wells Theatre in the hope of eventually rendering it what a theatre ought to be, a place for justly representing the works of our great dramatic poets.

"This undertaking is commenced at a time when the stages which have been exclusively called 'National' are closed or devoted to very different objects from that of presenting the real drama of England, and when, moreover, the law has placed all

theatres upon an equal footing of security and respectability, leaving no difference except in the object and conduct of their management.*

"These circumstances justify the notion that each separate division of our immense Metropolis, with its 2,000,000 of inhabitants, may have its own well-conducted theatre within a reasonable distance of the homes of its patrons.

"For the North of London the managers of Sadler's Wells Theatre offer an entertainment selected from the first stock drama in the world, reinforced by such novelties as can be procured by diligence and liberality, intending that the quality of their novelties shall constantly improve as time is given to procure and prepare them.

"The plays will be presented by a Company of acknowledged talent, playing such characters as they would be called upon to sustain at Drury Lane and Covent Garden were those houses now devoted to the drama.

"These attractions are placed in a theatre where all can see and hear at a price fairly within the means of all.

"Commencing their enterprise under the disadvantage of very short preparation, the managers are aware that some errors and deficiencies are inseparable from such a circumstance; they trust, however, that their names are a sufficient guarantee for the honest endeavour to deserve further patronage, and they promise that the confidence and encouragement of the public shall be met by continual zeal and a liberality increasing constantly with the means of showing it.

"Finally, they will endeavour to confirm what may be found satisfactory, supply what may be at first difficult, and, above all, exalt the entertainments to meet the good taste of the audience."

(To be concluded in our September number.)

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* The Bill introduced in the House of Commons by Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer—afterwards Lord Lytton, and father of the late Viceroy of India—had just become law, abolishing the special privileges of the two patent theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, to represent the legitimate drama.

Voices!

[A Poem suggested by a Picture.]

BENEATH the shade of a chancel old,
'Midst ruin of rose, and daisies fair,
I stood alone, in the sunset gold,
And listened for voices there.
A whisper fell from the ivy's nest,
A sigh came over the distant sea,
But the only presence I felt was rest,
And the pulse of memory!

Voices! torn from the tideless sea,
Voices! borne from the golden shore,
Voices! sweet, that are lost to me,
Not lost but gone before!

A wandering sunbeam kissed the feet
Of a marble cross where an infant slept,
And a garden of lilies, passing sweet,
Grew out of the tears she wept!
A bird sang out of the darkened yew,
A briar of roses kiss'd its stem—
Oh! death in life! if the lost ones knew!
Do they long, as we long for them?

'Twas here they buried my heart one day;
They shut love's door and closed the gate;
Our summer was over, the year turned grey
At the chill of the hand of fate!
And here in a garden of rose and yew
They'll whisper prayers and chant the hymn,
And here will follow the faithful few,
And here I shall rest with him!

July, 1886. C. S.

Some Famous "First Nights."

By Charles Hervey.

It is, I believe, regarded as a *sine quâ non* by every intelligent manager that on the first performance of a piece his theatre should be as fully attended as it conveniently (or inconveniently) can. Not that he expects to derive any large amount of profit from the receipts, the accommodation at the disposal of the paying public being on such occasions reduced to a minimum: nevertheless, for more reasons than one, he likes to see what the Parisians call a "belle salle"—firstly, because it stimulates the actors, who have an instinctive and very natural horror of playing to empty benches, and consequently gives the piece an additional chance of success; and secondly, because the more people he can assemble together, the more his novelty will be talked about, which he justly considers a necessary prelude to a lengthened run. Therefore, it is clearly his interest to be liberal in the distribution of tickets—or, in other words, to "set a sprat to catch a herring."

A "first night" audience is always a miscellaneous gathering, composed of heterogeneous elements, professional and non-professional, with but one point of resemblance between them—namely, the certainty of their being in their places before the rising of the curtain. The dramatic critics, of course, are there to a man, scattered about the house in box or stall, as the case may be, from the well-known representatives of the "dailies" down to the new hand experimentally employed by the proprietor of some recently launched journalistic venture. Then come the personal friends of the manager, those of the author and of the leading artists engaged in the piece, mixed up with a motley throng of rival dramatists and actors—whose indulgence, in the event of a collapse, is perhaps hardly to be relied on—besides that inevitable sprinkling of nondescripts, who have obtained admittance no one

knows how, but who, by some mysterious dispensation of Providence, are invariably to be found there.

I have seen a good many "first nights" in my time, but—not taking the last fifteen years into account—very few in London, the only ones I can remember being those of Sheridan Knowles's "John of Procida," Balfe's "Daughter of St. Mark," and, by far the most important of the three, "London Assurance," produced at Covent Garden March 4th, 1841. Rarely, indeed, has it fallen to the lot of a young and untried writer to commence his career under more flattering auspices. In November, 1840, according to his own statement, wholly unknown and without patronage or recommendation, he submitted his comedy to the management under the assumed name of Lee Moreton, and four months later "found himself famous." A more sympathetic audience I never saw; from the first scene to the last not a hit missed fire, and at the conclusion of every act the general satisfaction was manifested by repeated rounds of applause. I particularly recollect the roar of delight when Charles Mathews, the inimitable Dazzle, on hearing that Mr. Solomon Isaacs threatened to put a man into young Courtly's house in Curzon Street, asked if "he couldn't make it a woman"; and, above all, the ringing cheers that greeted Mrs. Nisbett's description of the steeplechase, where Blueskin "did the eight miles in thirty minutes and scarcely turned a hair." Mr. Boucicault (he was Bourcicault then, by the way) has since scored many a well-merited triumph, but I am inclined to doubt if he has ever had reason to congratulate himself on a more decisive victory than the unanimous verdict of that memorable evening.*

A dramatised version of "Les Mystères de Paris," brought out at the Porte-St.-Martin, was the first *première* I had an opportunity of witnessing in the French capital. Like most other attempts to condense the principal incidents of an interminable novel into a five-act piece, it failed to excite more than a passing interest; and, although admirably got up and well acted, especially by Frédéric Lemaître, as Jacques Ferrand, and Raucourt, as the Maître d'Ecole, proved by no means a Pactolus

* Mrs. Fanny Kemble, in her "Records," alludes to a report of his having received three hundred pounds as a fixed remuneration for his comedy, and adds that on the strength of this windfall he was said to have bought "a horse, a 'miraculous' cab, and ordered seven new coats."

to the treasury. Some nights later, just before the termination of the performance, a singular mishap occurred. In the last scene the curtain came down with a sudden rush, and an alarm of fire having been raised by a portion of the audience, loud cries from all parts of the house summoned the stage-manager to explain what had happened. On his appearance he was greeted with a volley of questions as to the cause of the supposed disaster, and imperatively charged to inform the public if the fire had been extinguished. "Messieurs," replied the puzzled functionary, "there is no fire that I am aware of. I have only to apologise for the curtain having been inadvertently let down a moment too soon, thereby preventing M. Frédéric Lemaître from having the honour of exclaiming three times, as he has always done since the first night of the piece—'Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!'" This impromptu harangue, delivered with becoming gravity and a not over-successful attempt to imitate the actor's voice and manner, was received with shouts of laughter, under cover of which the *régisseur* solemnly withdrew, with the air of a man who had satisfactorily acquitted himself of an important duty.

Early in February, 1848, a few days previous to the downfall of the Citizen King, the first instalments of "Monte Cristo" were given on two successive evenings at the Théâtre Historique; the remaining portions of the drama, nipped in the bud by the revolution, not being destined to see the light until after the lapse of several years. On this occasion the stereotyped phrase of "tout Paris" was not a mere figure of speech, but an indisputable reality; never, perhaps, was a more astounding mixture of classes collected together in a theatre. Boxes, stalls, pit, gallery, and corners in the orchestra were invaded by celebrities of every kind—peers of France, jockey club lions, fashionable beauties, side by side with *titis* in blouses, jostling one another in stern equality, and all, to say the least, as eager to be seen as to see. The stage box belonging to Dumas was occupied by the wife of a Russian prince, Jules Janin sat enthroned in the centre of the house, Léon Gozlan and Eugène Guinot were my near neighbours in the stalls, and in a little box on a level with the chandelier a pretty actress of the Palais Royal displayed a toilette which five years of her salary would scarcely have paid for. Near her sat a lady in a perfect blaze of diamonds, which would have been magnificent had they been real. In the distance, however, they looked effective enough,

and during an *entr'acte* Lambert Thiboust, the clever vauderillist whose early death was a loss to the stage, determined to ascertain whether they were genuine or not, and started on a voyage of discovery, from which he soon returned, shrugging his shoulders.

"*Du strass,*" he quietly remarked; "at all events they are in harmony with the piece."

"How so?" inquired Gozlan.

"Puisque ce sont des *cristaux montés!*"

With a cast including Mélingue as the hero, Boutin, Rouvière, and Madam Person, and a perfection of scenery and appointments which no other Parisian theatre could then have surpassed, it was indeed unfortunate for Dumas that the political catastrophe of the next fortnight prevented him from reaping the fruits of his labours, and abruptly terminated the career of a drama which under more favourable circumstances would inevitably have made his fortune.

The first performance in the Salle Ventadour of Alfieri's tragedy, "Mirra," was an event to be remembered as the crowning triumph of that marvellously gifted actress, Adelaide Ristori. I doubt if any of her contemporaries would have ventured to undertake so repulsive a part, and I feel convinced that they would not have been listened to if they had. Even to those who had already seen and admired her in "Francesca da Rimini" it was a revelation of qualities as yet unsuspected, reminding one at times of Rachel in "Phèdre," but with more grace, more tenderness, and infinitely more charm. As Mr. Henry Greville in his "Diary" truly says: "She looks the character exactly, and manages to be impassioned and decent in her delineation of it; and above all, though the whole play turns on the same sentiment, she is never monotonous." Nine-tenths of those present were busily engaged in following the actors through the medium of a French translation, absorbed in the twofold occupation of listening to the melodious accents of the heroine and, as the simultaneous turning of the leaves every now and then testified, referring to the text for explanation. As a proof of the success of "Mirra," I remember hearing on good authority that during the run of the piece the sale of the book exceeded fifteen thousand copies.

An adaptation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," brought out at the Ambigu under the title of "La Case de l'Oncle Tom," one of those long-winded spectacular dramas lasting from seven o'clock until past midnight, in which Boulevard playgoers particularly delight,

was a fair specimen of its class, but a sore trial to the patience of those for whom five acts and an indefinite number of "tableaux" have no especial charm. The most sensational incidents of the story, such as the flight across the ice and an interpolated duel "à l'Américaine" (highly relished by the occupants of the gallery), were reproduced with considerable effect; and both Chilly (the senator Bird) and Madame Guyon, the latter of whom, cleverly made up as the quadroon Eliza, looked splendidly handsome, were excellent. Poor Harrison Ainsworth, whom I had inveigled thither by specious promises of amusement, which I fear were in his case unrealised, had been for nearly six hours wedged in between two stout ladies, whose flounces and furbelows left him barely sitting room in what by courtesy is called at the Ambigu a "fauteuil d'orchestre," and, not being at that period the slimmest of mortals, was utterly unable to extricate himself from his "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" position until "Uncle Tom" and his persecutors were finally disposed of, when a brisk walk to Tortoni's and a cup of invigorating chocolate opportunely restored his equanimity.

In a former number of The Theatre I have attempted to describe the first night of "La Dame aux Camélias" at the Vaudeville, and now close these rambling recollections by a brief reference to Théodore Barrière's best comedy, "Les Faux Bonshommes," produced at the same theatre, November 11, 1856. Contrary to his usual habit, the author had in this instance devoted more than ordinary attention to the construction of his plot; but there still remained certain incongruities, which a more practised hand would have avoided. Old Duvert, near whom I was sitting, wriggled about discontentedly in his stall towards the close of the last act.

"I always maintained," he whispered to me, "that Barrière resembled the architect who in building a house unaccountably forgot the staircase. This time the staircase is there, but—*where are the stairs?*"

An Old-World Dramatist.

By Mabel E. Wotton.

THE seventeenth century was pre-eminently the age of tragedies; and these tragedies, moreover, were of strong domestic interest, inasmuch as they were furnished not by the age, but by the lives of private individuals. It may have been that poor Charles Stuart set this sombre fashion when he lost his head at Whitehall, and that our ancestors, like ourselves, were fond of apeing royalty; but, be that as it may, it is an indisputable fact that there were fewer snug common-place lives, and more desperate and tragic ones, in England in the seventeenth century than in any other. In the political see-saw for power that in barely twenty-one years saw a king beheaded, the rise and fall of a republic, and the restoration of the monarchy, it can hardly be thought wonderful that, while so many bodies suffered, hearts ached in proportion; but surely it is somewhat noteworthy that literary men—men who were in no wise concerned in warfare, and many of whom did not mix in politics—should not have been one whit behind the rest in sustaining this most unenviable reputation of the age. To this it may of course be objected that the art of keeping a skeleton in one's cupboard has not at all fallen into disuse; but, whatever may be the private woes of our present-day dramatists and poets, they do not, at all events, produce plays like "Venice Preserved," and then die from the results of starvation, like poor Otway; nor live neglected like Abraham Cowley; nor, again, are they starved like Butler; nor are they one year the talk of the town, and the next left to die in a gutter, like Nathaniel Lee. Alas, poor Lee! Not even the most dashing of cavaliers, as portrayed by the melo-dramatic stage, could enter the lists with him with any reasonable hope of posing as the hero of more escapades or greater vicissitudes. "The Prince of Dramatists," "the Drunkard," "Fortune's Favourite," "the Pauper," "Dryden's Collaborator," "the Mad Poet";—these are a few of

the titles and *soubriquets* by which we find him designated at different periods of his life, and they give us a tolerably clear idea of the ups and downs that attended his career. * Born at a time when the government was most firmly assured, and, consequently, a fair future was dawning for literature and the arts, Lee may be said to have fulfilled the old adage of coming into the world with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father, a certain Dr. Richard Lee, was the incumbent of Hatfield, in Hertfordshire; and here, in the sober little country parsonage, the boy passed the happiest years of his life. Dr. Lee appears to have kept no touch of the outer world; and when, at the end of 1665, his little ten-year old son was landed at Westminster School, then under the care of the famous Dr. Busby, the change from the quiet Hertfordshire lanes to the still plague-tainted London must have been startling indeed. Although Dr. Busby did not possess the art of making education particularly agreeable to his pupils, he certainly got them on; and in 1668 (two years after the episode of the great fire had probably driven the Westminster boys half mad with excitement), young Nat Lee obtained a scholarship, and passed on to Trinity College, Cambridge.

Here he shortly afterwards took his B.A. degree. So far, so good. For seventeen years our young hero had played the *rôle* of Good Boy to the complete satisfaction of old Lee, who still went placidly on his way in distant Hatfield, and who was still destining his boy for the Church. In all likelihood these paternal arrangements would have been carried out in due time, but for an event which now occurred to upset for ever these carefully-laid plans. George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, went down to Cambridge on a visit, and while there, in truly characteristic fashion, he took it into his head to do a good-natured act that should cost him nothing, and forthwith granted an interview to the importunate boy-student, who had addressed a set of verses to his Grace. The interview was a success as far as personal pleasure went. The jaded statesman of forty-five was amused and gratified by the young enthusiasm he had awakened, and Lee was naturally elated by the great man's kindness. When the Duke finally suggested that the young collegian should quit cap

* The date of his birth has been given indifferently as 1650 and 1655, but the greater insight of evidence is in favour of the later year.

and gown and come up to London—the London of Milton, Dryden, and the rest—as a member of his own household, his *protégé's* gratitude knew no bounds, and, flinging all previous resolutions to the winds, Nat Lee put an abrupt ending to the first chapter of his life, and went up to town in triumph.

Alas for the innocence of young credulity! For Villiers to interest himself in a clever, bright boy, and to wile away the time with his outspoken worship when he had plenty of holiday leisure was one thing; but it was quite another to remember even his name when he was once more surrounded by his London friends, ordinary enjoyments and cares. The utmost his patron ever did for him was to introduce him to Sir William Davenant, and then leave him either to sink or swim by himself. A word or two as to this same Sir William, for, though he died a few months after Lee came to town, he treated the lad very generously, and certainly did his best for him. In 1656 Davenant had conceived a brilliant idea. The puritanical hindrances to theatrical performances seem much to have resembled these with which our Middlesex magistrates hamper the music halls of to-day; so, in order to evade the law and at the same time to make money out of a play of his own, Davenant opened Rutland House, in Charterhouse Yard, for a strange medley of entertainments he chose to dignify by the name of operas. The German Reed's entertainment is moulded on a somewhat similar plan; and, doubtless, people who were too good to be theatre-goers thronged then to Rutland House, as they do now to St. George's Hall. But the Restoration brought him better times, and he became manager of the Duke of York's players, who acted first in Portugal Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and afterwards in Dorset Gardens. One clause in his patent is especially interesting, for in it is enacted that:—

> "Whereas women's parts in plays have hitherto been acted by men in the habits of women, at which some have taken offence, we do permit and give leave for the time to come that all women's part be acted by women on the stage."

As a matter of fact, there had been actresses on the stage in Charles the First's time, but their appearance had generally been a matter of personal influence, and this was the first time that it was made permissible by law. Davenant was also the first to introduce changes of scenery. So he really did a great deal for

the theatre, although it is the fashion to sneer at him for his utter incomprehension of blank verse, of which, it is needless to add, he imagined himself a most competent judge. At all events he was a very good friend to young Lee, and offered him the part of Duncan in his own adaptation of "Macbeth." The stripling was only seventeen, be it remembered, so the honour was great; but he was a fine, well-grown fellow, possessed of great charm of manner, a most beautiful voice, and—considering the conquest he had made of the fastidious Buckingham—it is but fair to suppose, handsome to boot. Indeed, take him altogether, when Davenant engaged him he may have been thinking quite as much of his own business as of the lad's advancement; but, as events turned out, the new-comer's *début* as an actor was disastrous to both. His Duncan was such a miserably bad performance that he gave up the stage in despair; and none of his friends demurred against his decision on the ground that he might do better in time. In those good old days, if a man could not get on when he was once upon the stage, he incontinently came off it; and the galaxy of star actors that shone at this period was perhaps in no little measure due to this fact.

Nat Lee was accordingly flung upon his own resources, for, shortly after the Duncan fiasco, Davenant had died, and, of course, it was no use appealing again to the Duke. All communication seems to have ceased between him and his family, the most probable solution of which is that his home people had objected to him taking the law into his own hands in the matter of a profession. As a natural consequence, poor, friendless, and utterly destitute of self-control, Lee fell into bad hands, and laid the seeds of that terrible craving for drink which was to prove his curse in after years. The awful horror of inherited insanity now came to add to his troubles, and we can imagine no more piteous picture than this poor boy wandering about the inhospitable London streets, and conjuring up all fictious evils to add to the painfully literal ones of hunger and distress. He apparently had neither the spirit nor the invention to follow the fashion of the day and appeal to a wealthy patron, for had he done so success would not have been very difficult to obtain. Nell Gwynne, who was always ready to help a less fortunate comrade (and for this let all honour be awarded her) was high in favour with the king, and she would have been the very one to welcome this boy, whose

sweetness of voice was remarkable, and whose genius literally flamed in his dark fiery eyes. Dryden would have helped him, as he assuredly did help him some five years later; the powerful Mrs. Bracegirdle was still alive; in Bunhill Fields the friendly blind Milton was ever ready with advice and welcome for younger writers; and outside these and such as these, were the bigwigs of the Court, whose patronage of a book meant actual payment to its author. But, no; Lee was poor and proud, and men are the same all the world over. He would force recognition instead of requesting it, and fired by this laudable intention, which was aided no doubt by a pressing necessity for ready money, he turned his thoughts to play-writing, and in 1675 produced the tragedy of "Nero." This was excellently received, and the fact that it was the work of a lad of twenty made fickle fashion at once veer round and proclaim Nat Lee as a genius. A few pages of Gibbon will give the plot, so it is useless to re-write it here, but it is noticeable that it is written in blank verse, as indeed were the bulk of his later plays. He generally wrote (or sometimes had written for him) the prologue and epilogue in verse, and there is constantly a rhymed tag to the text at the finale of a scene, as in those plays of Shakespeare we ascribe as belonging to his middle period, but the plays themselves are in blank verse. This is interesting, insomuch that only twelve years before there had been a learned controversy (started by John Dryden in the dedication of his "Rival Ladies") as to the proper form in which to write plays. Shakespeare's example naturally did not count for much in an age when every scribbler was at liberty to adapt and alter him, and while Dryden argued that the dignity of a tragic play demanded rhyme as its proper vehicle of expression, his opposers supported blank verse on the ground that it more closely resembled the prose of ordinary talk. If the news of this precious argument reached Milton's ears, how the poet must have laughed in his sleeve as he thought of the great blank verse poem which was shortly to see the light! Dryden's opponents won the day, and, accordingly, for the spirit of any age finds reflection in its younger writers, Nat Lee, as regards form, was thoroughly of his time.

The same year that saw the production of "Nero" was afterwards famous as the date of another play from the pen of a then equally unknown, but perhaps even greater writer. The earlier life

of Thomas Otway had been in a great measure identical with that of Lee. Both were the sons of country clerics, both had been at public schools and then on to the university, both had tried an actor's lot, and both had failed. Then came a difference, for while Lee was being rapidly reduced to the last shifts of the luckless, the more fortunate Otway was doing soldier's work in Flanders. Back again in England, he brought out his "Alcibiades," almost simultaneously with Lee's "Nero," but though the latter was the better received, a second play by Otway towards the end of the year was a greater success than either from a money point of view. Lee, however, was too busy to be jealous, and, indeed, in those days when a run of thirty nights was almost unprecedented, there was less room for jealousy amongst playwrights than at present, when a dramatist's success of necessity brings ill-luck to his successor, insomuch that it is retarding the production of a new play. Lee wrote with enormous rapidity, and in the following year produced two more tragedies, "Sophonisba" and "Gloriana" (more Gibbon), and in 1677 "The Rival Queens; or, the Death of Alexander," which was destined to be the most popular of his plays. For the benefit of those methodical few who are fond of placing a well-known quotation, I may as well here parenthetically remark that the much misquoted line:—

"When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war,"

occurs in "The Rival Queens," and that in its original form it runs:—

"When Greeks joined Greeks, then was the tug of war."

Dryden, who was by this time poet-laureate, wrote the prologue, and it was produced at the Theatre Royal. It was dedicated to the Earl of Mulgrave—better known to modern literature under his later title of the Duke of Buckinghamshire—and its great success was in no little measure due to the good offices of that gentleman. Mulgrave was an officious busy-body who, priding himself upon the refinement and exclusiveness of his taste, had taken upon himself the task of reforming the world of letters, but he made a good patron, and even wrote some fair verse. He is best remembered now by his absurd strictures on Shakespeare's method, which had the misfortune to displease him. He reconstructed "Julius Cæsar" for the sake of preserving the unities,

and even altered various expressions which struck him as vulgar. For instance, Anthony's declaration that :—

> "The evil that men do lives after them ;
> The good is oft interred with their bones"

was changed by the polite lord into

> "The good is often buried in their graves."

Nat Lee was now at the zenith of his fame. He was universally popular both at the theatre and in the outside world, and had he chosen he could have been equally respected. But, unfortunately, the tinge of Bohemianism which had made the future divine turn play-actor intensified in later life, and with all his genius and with all his power he was "content to reign in hell." His favourite haunt was the "Bear and Harrow" in Butcher Row, on the site of which part of the New Law Courts now stand. Butcher Row, afterwards called Pickett Street, was a very narrow thoroughfare, running from Ship Yard to Holywell Street, by the side of St. Clement's Church. There, surrounded by low associates, would sit drinking or making love to the rough girls around him, the man whose genius had caused Dryden to seek him as a promised collaborator in a forthcoming play, and whose love passages are more intensely beautiful than are any of his contemporaries. "We live in such an age, When no one dies for love but on the stage," were Lee's own words, and he spoke them in sombre belief. It seems hard to believe that the fervency and richness of his love-making were not due to a woman's influence ; but if Charles Kingsley's theory that lovers write the least personal love poetry be true, by inverted reasoning Lee's very power is but a further proof of the isolation in which he lived.

The collaborated play came off in 1679, and brought Lee the friendship of Betterton, the actor who played the title rôle, Œdipus. This event turned out well for them both, as in all Lee's future plays he wrote a special part for Betterton, and the latter in his turn largely contributed to their popularity. Betterton, by the way, was the first actor who was sent to Paris by royal command to see what he could learn from the French stage, but with what results we are not told. This is a pity, as Betterton must have seen the wonderful Michel Baron, besides many other theatrical celebrities, for this was the time when the purifying influence of Corneille, Racine, and Molière was most strongly

marked, and the French stage was at the height of its power. This influence was largely felt by many of our own dramatists. Davenant's entertainment in Charterhouse Yard was but a copy of a similar thing in France. Corneille was the adopted instructor of Dryden. Mulgrave's stupid protest as to poor Shakespeare's ignorance in the matter of the unities was equally the outcome of Corneille's theories. Nat Lee was one of the few English dramatists who owed little or nothing to France. It has been urged by his enemies that this arose from his unwillingness to add to his large list of debtors, and indeed he was always more or less in debt To give him money was useless, for though, as we have previously seen, his powers of production were marvellously rapid, and though he always received a very fair price for his plays, he was constantly out of pocket. In 1680 he wrote three more tragedies, and in the prologue of one of them he makes a desperate appeal to his audience to be content with his work; their opinion is a matter of life or death to him :—

> "Th' unhappy man who once has trailed a pen
> Lives not to please himself but other men,
> Is always drudging, wastes his life and blood,
> Yet only eats and drinks what you think good.
> . . . Every fool can bid the poet starve."

A detailed list of the plays of a well-nigh forgotten dramatist is apt to tax the reader's patience pretty severely, but I must beg forgiveness if I linger a little with the tragedy of "Mithridates, King of Pontus," for, in my humble opinion, the beauties and the weaknesses of Nat Lee as a writer are shown more clearly in this play than in any other. His chief fault was plagiarism, and Shakespeare (himself a great thief in literary matters), was the writer he most extensively robbed. In this very play the passionate soliloquy of a sleepless prince is almost identical in idea with Henry the Fourth's "O, gentle sleep! Nature's soft Nurse," &c.

> "O, 'tis too much! I never shall sleep more,
> And yet the servants sleep! . . .
> So sleeps the sea boy on the cloudy mast,
> Safe as a drowsy Triton, racked with storms,
> While tossing princes wake on beds of down."

This is but a solitary instance, but the same thing occurs constantly, and though, of course, there is much that is pure and unadulterated Lee, still many of his expressions are so

thoroughly in the fashion of the elder dramatist that he must have been as fully impregnated with the Shakespearean spirit as young Ireland himself. In speaking of insults from princes, "It breaks the very neck of loyalty" might be Hamlet's own, and as a further proof we may quote his apostrophe to Fear :—

"When the sun sets, shadows that showed at noon
But small, appear most long and terrible.
So when we think fate hovers o'er our heads
Our apprehensions shoot beyond all bounds :
Owls, ravens, crickets, seem the watch of death ;
Nature's worst vermin scare her god-like sons,
Echoes, the very leavings of a voice,
Grow babbling ghosts, and call us to our graves.
Each mole-hill thought swells to a huge Olympus,
While we, fantastic dreamers, heave and puff,
And sweat with an imagination's weight."

But though he stole—or, as a plagiarist of to-day would more delicately put it—though he "conveyed" more ideas from the immortal bard than he had any right, to his honour be it said that all the vulgarities in speech, all the coarseness in phraseology that we are taught to excuse on the ground that they appealed to the gallery, find no reflection (with the exception of but one play), in Lee's writings. His plays deal chiefly with the results of breaking the sixth and seventh commandments, it is true, but then his characters were chiefly portraits, and neither Nero's court nor the Borgias', for instance, was a nursery for morals; but, as a dramatic critic naively told us the other day, we admire and study in association with a Roman toga the portrayal of such passions as we could not tolerate in connection with a dress coat, and any one who has read Morris's "Epic of Hades" can read Nat Lee's plays. One more quotation, and one only, for as a dying appeal from a man who has been most foully wronged, there are few, I venture to think, that are finer or more pathetic in the whole range of literature. The lines are taken from the tragedy of "Mithridates." Ziphares, his son, is meditating set destruction in the horror of finding his future wife, Semandra, has become the mistress of his own father. The girl's father vows that his own death shall follow that of his royal master, and he is thus answered by the heart-broken young prince :—

"I would entreat thee not.
Thou hast no sorrows that are past the sufferance,

And sure my flying soul would hang her wing,
When she shall feel thy weighty death upon her.
O, Archilatis, leave me to my fate!
If thou must see me fall, I charge thee live,
At least so long to tell Semandra of me.
Bear her some token of my ill-starred love
Which empire could not win to live without her.
Dip in the blood which trickles from my heart
Thy handkerchief, and bid her keep it for me
As a remembrance now and then to mourn me.
Swear to do this!"

Three more plays, one of them being in conjunction with Dryden, brings us up to '84, when old Dr. Lee died. His poor son had been verging on madness for several months, and this news was the last touch that was necessary. His brain gave way completely, and in November he was removed to Bethelem Hospital. In those days the building stood on the north side of London Wall, extending from the present Finsbury Pavement to the present Bloomfield Street, and a gloomy enough place it must have been. Here he was confined for three and a half years, and, not being dangerous, was apparently allowed to receive not only friends, but strangers who went to satisfy their curiosity with a sight of the "mad poet." One of these visitors, seemingly without any idea of the brutality of his words, joked poor Lee about the ample leisure he now had at his disposal, and added that it must be very easy to write like a madman. Lee's answer was prompt and to the point. "I don't know," quoth he, musingly, "that it is very easy to write like a madman, but evidently it is very easy to talk like a fool." In April, '88, he was discharged as cured, and then commenced a terrible hand to mouth struggle for existence. He was allowed ten shillings a week from the funds of the Theatre Royal, but such a sum was not of much use to Lee, who, finding his late illness had left him in a weakened condition of mind and body, went back to his old haunts of dissipation, in the hope of goading his jaded wits to newer exertions.

He took lodgings in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and his next literary effort was "The Princess of Cleves," the lightest and possibly the worst of plays. It is as easy to trace characteristics of which we are assured as it is to prophecy after the event, and the work is equally ungracious, or it would be no difficult task to point to passages in the play where the thought is so hidden in a cloud of words that it's meaning is often

obscured. This reproach, however, can hardly be brought against his next and, as it proved, his last play. In the "Massacre of Paris" (1690), the imagery is as grand and the language as fervent as anything he wrote in earlier years. It is altogether a powerful play, and the character of Charles the Ninth, although it is hardly a faithful portrait, is at least consistent and well drawn. The tone of the play is excellent, and the moral of the whole—the attendant evils of that bigotry which causes the Queen-mother to ride her "bloody bark, the Christian Church, to sail on seas of ruin"—is eminently praiseworthy in an age when bigotry was rampant and morals at a discount. The Bettertons and the famous Mrs. Barry were in the cast, and it is pleasant to think that the last of Lee's thirteen plays (written amid all the despondency caused by the knowledge of a rapidly approaching and inevitable death), was as successful as the maiden effort he had produced when a boy of twenty. He lingered for rather more than a year, and then, in the winter of 1691-2, came the end. He was reeling home one night through Clare Market, when his foot slipped in the snow and he fell to the ground. Unable to rise, and too shattered in constitution to endure the piercing cold, he soon died of exhaustion, and was shortly afterwards buried in the parish church of St. Clement Danes, at the side of his friend and brother-dramatist, Otway. No trace of his grave remains. His own lines on death must have recurred to the memory of the very few who were left to mourn him, when they heard how poor Nat Lee's life had ebbed away—unwatched and uncared for under the wintry skies:—

> "Death is not dreadful to a mind resolved,
> It seems as natural as to be born.
> Groans and convulsions, and discoloured faces,
> Friends weeping round us, blacks, and obsequies,
> Make death a dreadful thing. The pomp of death
> Is far more terrible than death itself."

The Toast.

QUIET was the field of battle; quiet was the evening sky;
They were sitting round the camp-fire; they were flushed with victory;
They had won a noble battle; they had fought a glorious fight;
And their lances, laid beside them, glittered in the starry light.
Some were singing songs of triumph; some were telling tales of wars;
Some, outwearied, were a-sleeping; some were binding bloody scars;
Some were gazing, lost in fancy, in the firelight, flickering red;
Some were talking of their comrades who were lying with the dead.

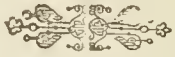
Then uprose a burly chieftain, "Comrades, by the Heavens above,
We have had our fill of fighting! let us drink our fill of Love!
Here's their health—our bonnie sweethearts! here's the girls we honour most!
Let your scars be, gory messmate! fill your glass, and pledge the toast!
Every soldier has his sweetheart, be that soldier knave or dunce!
Drink ye too, my married messmates! for your wives were sweethearts once!
I had liefer face my enemy, fair in fight, than meet the churl
Who would stint to drain his bumper to a gallant soldier's girl!
Here's their health, our bonnie sweethearts! here's the girls we honour most!
Come, rise up, you laggard lover! fill up, lad, and pledge the toast!"

For a soldier lay in silence, not a hand to pledge raised he;
"There be bonnier girls than sweethearts: drink yourselves, and let me be."

" 'Sdeath, an insult!" cried a comrade, grasping at his bayonet:
" I—
I've not had my fill of fighting! would you spurn our sweethearts by—
They—the bonniest girls in England! Why, you chicken-hearted churl,
I would spit you with my bayonet, if your death would please my girl!"
And another rose in anger, and he showed his gory knife;
" Bonnier girls than sweethearts, fellow! Why, that lie would end thy life
If my sweetheart asked me do it!" But the soldier lay at rest,
And he smiled upon the knife-blade, and the bayonet at his breast:

Then he slowly rose in silence, and he filled a bumper glass,
" Here's a bonnier girl to drink to, if she ain't a bonnier lass,
Spit me with your bayonet, messmate! stick me, comrade, with your knife!
Here's—my Mother! she who nursed me—reared me—loves me—gave me life!"

SAMUEL K. COWAN, M.A.



Players of the Past.

By Austin Brereton.

V.—SAMUEL FOOTE.

"THIS is the nephew of the gentleman who was lately hung in chains for murdering his brother." Such was the startling and unique manner in which one of the most brilliant and caustic wits of the eighteenth century was introduced to the frequenters of the Bedford Coffee-house. Mr. Cooke, who translated Hesiod, was noted for living in idleness by his wits, and he doubtless thought that in thus boldly making a statement as true as it was surprising he was doing his young friend a good turn. It is not every one who inherits a considerable fortune, at the age of twenty-one, thanks to a murder and an execution. "The nephew of the gentleman who was lately hung in chains for murdering his brother" was Samuel Foote, who was born at Truro in 1720. His father was for some time member of Parliament for Tiverton, and at the date of his son's birth was an active Cornish magistrate and influential country gentleman, receiver of fines for the duchy, and a joint commissioner of the prize office. His mother was the daughter of a baronet, Sir Edward Goodere, who represented the county of Hereford for many years, and who, by marriage with the grand-daughter of the Earl of Rutland, had connected with his own family the ancient house of the Dineleys, of Charlton, in Worcestershire. Our hero was placed in the collegiate school at Worcester, from which, as founder's kin, he was elected, in his seventeenth year, to Worcester College at Oxford. His brightness made him a favourite with the master, Dr. Miles, but he attracted more than ordinary attention by his wonderful mimicry of every one whom he met. But before proceeding further with the narrative of the life of young Sam Foote, it may be as well to glance at the catastrophe by which his uncles came to their untimely end.

A family quarrel of long standing existed between Sir John

Dineley Goodere and Captain Samuel Goodere, R.N., Mrs. Foote's brothers. So bitter had become the feeling between the brothers, that the baronet, who was unmarried and a little eccentric in his habits, had cut off the entail of the family estate in favour of his sister's issue, to the exclusion of the captain, who, in the winter of 1741, paid an unexpected visit to his brother in Bristol, and ostentatiously affected a reconciliation with him, having previously arranged that on the very night of their meeting a press-gang, partly selected from his own ship, the "Ruby" man-of-war, and partly from the "Vernon" privateer, should seize and hurry Sir John into a boat and convey him to the purser's cabin in the "Ruby," then lying in the King's-road. The affair was artfully arranged to look like a practice common enough in those days, but, unfortunately for the captain's plans, it was overdone. Suspicion was directed against the captain by reason of his publicly-acted recognition, and damning evidence came from one of his crew, who saw, through a crevice in the cabin, two of the "Ruby's" worst ruffians strangle the struggling victim. This witness also swore, in confirmation of the evidence of others who had witnessed their commander's watch outside the door at the time of the murder and his subsequent sudden disappearance inside, that in about a minute after the murder he saw an arm stretched out and a *white* hand about the throat of the deceased gentleman. Captain Goodere protested that he had no share in the murder, while his friends would have defended him on the plea that the act was not that of a sane person, but it is satisfactory to be able to relate that this brutal brother was deservedly hanged for the crime which, by its double issue, brought our wit a substantial fortune.

To return to Oxford. Young Foote entertained his friends with his mimicry, and was witty as well as impertinent to the pompous Provost Gower, a most pronounced pedant. Foote being called before him one day for a reprimand, armed himself with a huge dictionary and assumed an air of gravity and submission. On the doctor beginning in his usual manner with a terribly long word, Foote solemnly opened the dictionary, pretended to find the word, after, with great formality, begging pardon for interrupting the doctor, and then said, "Very well, sir, now please to go on." Obviously such a state of affairs could not be allowed to last long, and Foote quitted college in 1740, the third year of his undergraduateship. His exit was a little helped by the fact that, after

an interval of gaiety at Bath, he was found flaming through Oxford in society which, to say the least of it, was rather questionable, attended by two footmen, and with a ridiculous quantity of lace about his clothes. For all this he left college, we are assured "without any public censure." Coming to London, he entered as a student of the Inner Temple, frequented the Grecian and Bedford taverns, where his ready wit made him the most welcome of guests, and underwent some startling vicissitudes. At one time we find him living in great style at Charlton House, once the family seat in Worcestershire. Here he entertained his old schoolmaster, who, amazed at the extravagant splendour indulged in by his quondam pupil, was moved to ask him how much it might cost. Foote answered that he did not then know how much it might cost, but he certainly soon *should* know how much it would bring, an anticipation doubtless soon realised, for we next hear of Foote imprisoned for debt in the Fleet, where he supplied the wit, mirth, and jollity, a companion readily giving him in exchange for hearty laughter a copious meal of turbot, venison, and claret.

The striking characteristic of Foote's humour lay in its readiness. Whatever the occasion, he was never found wanting. It was impossible to put him out. He was interrupted one evening in the middle of one of his best stories, at the table of a man of rank, when some one, thinking to disconcert him, said, with an air of most profuse apology, "I beg your pardon, Mr. Foote, but your handkerchief is half out of your pocket." "Thank you, sir," said Foote, replacing it, "you know the company better than I do," and finished his story. Macklin was once composing himself for one of his solemn lectures, when a buzz of laughter from a group around Foote reached his ears. "Well, sir," he said, "you seem to be very merry there, but do you know what I am going to say now?" "No, sir," replied Foote; "*pray, do you?*" One night after supper one of the party assailed him on account of his indulgence in personal satire. "Why, what would you have?" exclaimed Foote, "I take off all my friends, but I use them no worse than myself, for I take myself off also." "Gadso!" replied his companion, "that I should like to see," whereupon Foote took up his hat and left the room. "No one," it has been said, "could so promptly overthrow an assailant; so quickly rebuke an avarice or meanness; so effectually abate and dissolve any ignorant pretence

or affectation." "Why do you attack my weakest part?" he asked of one who had raised a laugh against what Johnson calls his depeditation. "Did I ever say anything about your head?" Dining with a thrifty Scotch peer who dispensed his port in the smallest of decanters and glasses, the while he descanted upon its exquisite growth and age, "It is very little of its age," said Foote, holding up his diminutive glass. Being in company with Hugh Kelly, who was boasting of his enormous power as a reviewer of distributing literary reputation, "Don't be too prodigal of it," quietly rebuked Foote, "or you may leave none for yourself." "Well, Foote," said the "foolish" Duke of Cumberland, coming into the green-room of the Haymarket Theatre one night, "here I am, ready to swallow all your good things." "Really," was the reply, "your highness must have an excellent digestion, for you never bring up any again." "Why are you for ever humming that air?" he asked a man who lacked the sense of tune. "Because it haunts me." "No wonder," said Foote, "you are for ever murdering it." Much bored on one occasion by a pompous physician at Bath, who had confided to him that he had a mind to publish his poems, but had so many irons in the fire that he did not know what to do, "Take my advice, doctor," said Foote; "put your poems where your irons are." None knew better than Foote the disadvantage at which he was frequently placed with duller men by the exuberance of his humour, and there is much significance in his remark to young O'Keefe: "Take care of your wit," he said, "bottle up your wit." His rebuke to Rich was severe, but well deserved. The Covent Garden manager had been addressing him curtly as "Mister." Perceiving that Foote was annoyed, he apologised, saying: "I sometimes forget my own name." "I am astonished that you could forget your own name," said Foote, "though I know very well you cannot write it."

Foote's theatrical career dates from 1744. He had run through two fortunes, and, not caring to earn a livelihood as a hanger-on to tavern society, he turned to the stage for support. He consulted his friends, the celebrated amateur actors, Francis Delaval, afterward the baronet, and his brother, Lord Delaval, and Othello was fixed upon for Foote's first appearance. Garrick and Macklin had quarrelled, the latter withdrawing to the little wooden theatre in the Haymarket, where he was prevented by the Licensing Act

from taking money at the doors. The public were "admitted by tickets delivered by Mr. Macklin," and by advertising and beginning with a concert the Act was evaded. Foote joined Macklin, and accordingly the Haymarket bill of February 6, 1744, announced "a concert, after which 'Othello,' Othello by a gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage," Macklin being careful to add that "the character of Othello will be new dressed after the custom of his country." We can well imagine that Foote, with his small figure, twinkling eye, and bright expression was a distinct failure in the character. "Not but one could discover the scholar about the young fellow," said Macklin, "and that he perfectly knew what the author meant; but ——" Foote, however, repeated the part three times—on the 13th, 20th, and 23rd of the same month, and on the 10th of the following month he appeared in it again, at Drury Lane, for a benefit, being announced as "the gentleman who lately performed in the Haymarket." His next part was Lord Foppington in Vanbrugh's "Relapse," in which he was tolerably successful, but his Pierre and Shylock, like his Othello, were failures. In the winter of 1744-5 he went over to Dublin, where he played with success at the Smock Alley Theatre, under the management of Thomas Sheridan. The following winter finds him installed at Drury Lane, where he acted, four times, Sir Harry Wildair in Farquhar's "Constant Couple," with Peg Woffington, herself famous as Sir Harry, as his Lady Lurewell. Here, also, he repeated, several times, "Lord Foppington," with Mrs. Woffington as Berinthia and Kitty Clive as Miss Hoyden. He revived Addison's comedy of "The Drummer," appearing in it as Lord Tinsel. He played Sir Novelty Fashion in Cibber's "Love's Last Shift," Sir Courtly Nice in Crowne's comedy of that name, and the Younger Loveless in Beaumont and Fletcher's "Scornful Lady" on the occasion of Mrs. Woffington's benefit. He also acted Dick in Vanbrugh's "Confederacy," and finally he appeared as Bayes in the Duke of Buckingham's "Rehearsal." It was the latter character which mapped out for him his future career. Garrick, in Bayes, used to give imitations. Dressed in a shabby black coat, he presented a mere quizzible, solemn ass of a poet going about reciting his own verses. Lord Chesterfield said that by his treatment of Bayes the character lost dignity, but when Garrick, in the reading of the verses, gave a series of comical imitations of the actors most

familiar to the audience, he was applauded to the echo. Foote seized upon and exaggerated Garrick's idea. Mere mirth in Garrick became cutting sarcasm in Foote; "the licence Garrick had confined to the theatre, Foote carried with keener aim beyond it; the bad actors on the mimic stage he kept in countenance by worse actors on the real one; he laughed alike at the grave public transactions and the flying absurdities of the day; at the debates in Parliament, the failure of the rebels, the follies of the quidnuncs; at politicians, play-writers, players; and as, flash upon flash, the merriment arose, Foote must have felt where in all respects his real strength lay, and that there was a vacant place in the theatres he might by right take possession of, a ground to be occupied without rival or competitor." The last night of his performance at Drury Lane was in April, 1746. Foote then occupied himself in drawing up his scheme. His actors included Ned Shuter, Lee, and Mrs. Hallam. On April 22, 1747, he opened the Haymarket Theatre with a concert, followed by "a new entertainment, called 'The Diversions of a Morning,' to which will be added a farce taken from 'The Old Batchelor,' entitled 'The Credulous Husband,' Fondlewife by Mr. Foote; with an Epilogue to be spoken by the B—d—d Coffee House. To begin at 7." The theatre was crowded, and Foote proceeded to lash all public characters. His notoriety thus early drew the town, and his clever mimicry convulsed the house. The first performance had not ceased before he was dubbed, erroneously enough in many respects, the English Aristophanes. The actors immediately took up arms against Foote, to whom they applied the Licensing Act, with the result that on the second night a strong detachment of constables from Bow Street drove away the audience as they approached, leaving "the laughing Aristophanes to consider of new ways and means for support." The consideration did not occupy him long. The first performance was on April 22; the theatre was closed on the 23rd, and it was opened again on the 25th with the following invitation:—

"Mr. Foote begs the favour of his friends to come and drink a dish of chocolate with him; and 'tis hoped there will be a great deal of Comedy and some joyous spirits; he will endeavour to make the mornings as diverting as possible."

Thus defying the law, Foote proceeded in his plan. He spared no one in his ridicule. Dr. Burnaby, a notorious physician, less remarkable for professional eminence than for the oddity of his

personal appearance and meddlesome nature; Chevalier Taylor, a quack oculist of wide repute and indisputably bad character; Cocks, the auctioneer; Orator Henley; Sir Thomas de Veal, the justice of the peace; these, and many other noted persons of the day, came in for censure. The "Diversions," originally given at noon, were afterwards held in the evening, when "Mr. Foote's Tea" became a prominent theatrical attraction. He had an offer from Covent Garden the following winter, and there he gave his "Diversions," together with Bayes and Fondlewife. The month of March, 1748, again brought out Foote at the Haymarket, the advertisements announcing that "This evening, at his auction room, late the little theatre in the Haymarket, Mr. Foote will exhibit a choice collection of pictures," &c. So choice did the collection prove that it was exhibited fifty times before the close of the season, and proved the attraction of the opening of the winter season. Foote became firmly established at the Haymarket, where, by his own unaided efforts, his ready wit, and his mimicry, he accomplished the unparalleled feat of keeping the theatre open for the greater part of thirty years—from 1747 to 1777.

Despite Foote's unceasing ridicule of Garrick's weakness—his self-doubt and his habit of thrift, which bordered close upon parsimony—a cordial friendship existed between the two players. We all know the story of Garrick watching in agony the wasting candle which he was not able to save because a guest of consequence prevented him from taking the "thief" out. Another story well illustrates Garrick's reputation where money was concerned. At the Chapter Coffee-house Foote and his friends were making a contribution for the relief of a decayed player, who was nick-named the Captain of the Four Winds because his hat was worn into four spouts. Each person dropped his mite into the hat as it was held out to him. "If Garrick hears of this," said Foote, "he will certainly send us *his* hat."

Foote had a small bust of Garrick placed near his bureau. "You may be surprised," said he, "that I allow him to be so near my gold—but, you will observe, he has no hands." Another story is told of an announcement at one of Foote's dinner parties, when Garrick was among the guests, of the arrival of "Mr. Garrick's servants." "Oh, let them wait," cried Foote, "but, James, be sure to lock up the pantry." Again, Garrick and Foote

were leaving the Bedford one night, when Foote, who had been the entertainer, dropped a guinea on pulling out his purse to pay the bill. Impatient at not immediately finding it, he exclaimed, "Where can it be gone to?" "Gone to the devil," replied Garrick, who had been searching everywhere for the coin. "Well said, David," rejoined Foote; "trust you for making a guinea go further than anybody else."

Foote's humour carried everything before it. While at the Haymarket he ran through a third fortune, and got into financial difficulties. In these straits he listened to the proposal of a brewer, who, in consideration of his large social position, offered him a share in the concern if he would recommend the beer to his friends. But the beer became so bad that the servants at a certain house resolved to drink it no more. Knowing Foote's connection with it and his great influence with their master, they were at a loss how to proceed in their resolution. At length they fixed upon a little black boy to deliver their message to the master of the house on a certain day. It so happened that Foote was dining at the house on the appointed day when the boy, who served at table, was so delighted with Foote's good stories, brilliancy, and grimace that he went downstairs and said, "This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small beer."

(To be concluded in our September number.)

Ars Longa–Vita Brevis.

By W. Gordon Smythies.

SWEET the summer breezes over
Rip'ning fields of purple clover
Blew into the artist's room;
And, with twittering and flutter,
Swallows round the window shutter
Clung upon the trellis bloom:

But the pallid artist, sitting,
Never marked the swallows flitting
Through the clover-scented air,
For his eyes of eager yearning
To his canvas ever turning
Gazed with infinite despair!

While a voice, his ears assailing,
Whispers: "It is unavailing;
"Life is weak, and Death is strong:
"Thus it is, and will be ever,
"All in vain is your endeavour—
"Life is short, and Art is long!"

Day by day, with strength diminished,
At the picture, all unfinished,
He had laboured in his room;
With a frame by fever broken,
Eloquent in sign and token
Of his near approaching doom!

Yet with labour unremitting,
At his easel ever sitting,
Feels his hopes grow less and less;
All his hopes and noble longing
In his bosom thronging, thronging,
Thus to end in nothingness.

And the voices, louder calling,
With a potency enthralling,
  In the burden of their song,
Like discordant bells a-ringing,
In his ears are ever singing:
  "Life is short, and Art in long!"

"God, Thou knowest how, for ever,
"With a strong and true endeavour,
  "I have toiled for Thee and Art!
"Living years of self-denial,
"Years of bitter cross and trial,
  "Weary brain and aching heart!

"For a moment once I faltered,
"And my purpose would have altered,
  "For she pleaded so to me!
"Closer, closer then she nestled—
"While within my bosom wrestled
  "Love and Art for mastery!

"All in vain was thy appealing,
"Elsie! who, before me kneeling,
  "Bade me turn from Art to Love.
"Even thee I left unheeding—
"She, in bitter grief exceeding,
  "Passed from Earth to realms above!

"Through what pangs and dread ordeal,
"Striving for my soul's ideal,
  "Ever I aspired on!
"But, till now, my grasp eluding,
"Visions bright my soul deluding,
  "Never on the canvas shone.

"Till, at last! I see the glowing
"Visions on the canvas growing,
  "Growing ever more and more.
"And, while yet the daylight lingers,
"Eagerly my aching fingers
  "Guide the pencil o'er and o'er.

"But a wild, a dread misgiving
"In my bosom has its living:
  "Still a voice within me cries,
"'All in vain life's long endeavour,

"'On that canvas never, never,
"'Perfect shall the vision rise!'

"Gentle Lord! in thy perfection,
"See me in my deep dejection;
"Let my toil be not in vain;
"Strengthen Thou my failing powers,
"Grant me but some further hours,
"Free from weakness, free from pain!"

As this prayer the artist ended,
Peace upon his heart descended,
Sleep upon his senses fell!
And he sees from Heaven's portal
Come a messenger immortal,
Clad in robes of Asphodel!

And, as nearer came the vision,
He could see, with all precision,
That the face was as *his own*;
His the form, round which the vesture
Softly clung, and, with a gesture,
Spake in voice of sweetest tone.

While the sound of Angels singing
In the artist's ear is ringing—
Sweetly ringing, soft and low!
And the breezes, wafted over
Rip'ning fields of purple clover,
Kiss the sleeper's weary brow.

"I am come," so spake the vision,
"Come from happy realms elysian,
"Granting all thy prayer doth ask.
"Sleep thou on, oh weary mortal!
"I am come from Heaven's portal,
"To complete thy life-long task!'

To the easel then advancing,
By a touch the whole enhancing,
Perfect grew the work of Art!
While the artist, eager gazing,
Sees the miracle amazing
With a wildly beating heart!

Scarcely to his senses trusting,
Open wide the lattice thrusting,
To his grey-haired master cries:
"Tell me, is this but a vision,
"Fiendish sport of Hell's derision,
"That appears before my eyes?"

Long the Master stood—and, gazing,
Uttered not a sound of praising,
Giving neither word nor sign;
Then, at length, in accents broken,
Words with trembling awe were spoken:
"This is work of hands Divine!"

* * * * * *

Soft the breezes, wand'ring over
Fragrant fields of purple clover,
Stole into the painter's room;
Kissed the brows of snowy whiteness,
Kissed the eyes, around whose brightness
Gathered shadows of the tomb!

Sweetest sleep his eyelids closing,
Peacefully he lies reposing
As he murmurs words of prayer;
While her name, so often uttered,
By his lips is fondly muttered,
Wafted on the summer air.

Loud he hears throughout his dreaming,
Music, sweet, triumphant, streaming,
Hears his own familiar name!
Sees, in robes of angels wearing,
Elsie! and her hands are bearing
Golden laurel wreath of Fame!

* * * * * *

Love has crowned the artist, lying,
With a wreath of Fame, undying;
While a wondrous voice Divine
Calls from Heaven's op'ning portal:
"Enter at the Gates Immortal—
"Love and Fame alike are thine!'

Our Musical-Box.

"FRIVOLI."

A new Comic Opera, in three acts, English words by Wm. Beatty-Kingston, music by Herve
Produced at Drury Lane Theatre on Tuesday, June 29, 1886.

Frivoli	Madame Rose Hersee	Rosella	Miss Marie Tempest
Chevalier de Ligny ...	Mr. A. D. Pierpoint	Harriet	Miss Martin
Count di Serda	Mr. Thorndyke	Duchess di Begonia ...	Miss Emily Soldene
Duke de Begonia .	Mr. Harry Nicholls	Marchioness diPiombino	Miss Kate Munroe
Krummbein	Mr. Robert Pateman	Nina	Miss Edith Vane
Lorenzo	Mr. S. W. Gilbert	Lauretta	Miss Clara Graham
Pietro	Mr. Victor Stevens	Pierette	Miss Marian Grahame
Sergeant	Mr. Forbes Drummond	Lieutenant	Miss Maud Roderick
John	Master Devonport		

Mr. Augustus Harris has shown the spirit of boldness in many of his managerial ventures, but in none more conspicuously than his latest. The tide of popularity which for a time made comic opera one of the most successful forms of entertainment in the metropolis had ceased to flow. One after another the theatres thereto devoted had closed their doors or changed their tactics; two or three out of perhaps half a score were all that continued to stick to the old text. Suddenly, when the ebb is at its lowest, we hear that Drury Lane, of all places in the world, is to be made the temporary home of the once-favoured exotic which we imported from France when Offenbach's genius was bright and fresh. Musical folks rub their eyes in astonishment. What can it mean? Comic opera of the kind Carl Rosa gives—the genuine product of the Opéra Comique—finds it hard enough to flourish in a space so much more ample than that for which it was originally designed; how, then, must it be with *opéra bouffe*, which needs a still smaller frame to display to advantage its special and characteristic features? Playgoers are chiefly surprised because they cannot comprehend why Mr. Harris deserts his favourite battle-horse, Melodrama, which has carried him safely through many a past summer campaign. The secret, however, soon leaks out. "Frivoli" is to be the medium for a grand spectacular "show," worthy of the best Drury Lane pantomime traditions; and this, combined with sparkling music "in the style of Auber," is to be the attraction that will, or at least should, suffice to draw crowded houses all through the "dog-days."

Well, it was an experiment; and Mr. Harris had succeeded in so many that he was perfectly justified in trying this. It has not, I fear, turned out so fortunate as the majority. Partly for the reasons that prevented spectacular comic opera, admirably as it was done, from prospering at the Alhambra; partly because it is at best an unsatisfactory work, "Frivoli" has failed to make a hit. It is strange that the manager should not have sought for better material wherewith to work out his newest idea. He seems to have desired, on the contrary, to

fulfil the axiom, *Fiat experimentum in corpore vili.* Those who do not fondly cherish the memory of "Chilpéric," "Le Petit Faust," and "L'Œil Crevé" had well-nigh forgotten the existence of such a composer as M. Louis Hervé. Those who do must now regret that his reputation in this country was not allowed to rest on the early successes in question; it is not pleasant, after being told that an old favourite is coming to the fore again with something far superior to anything he has ever produced, to find instead that what inspiration he had has left him, and that little of the former piquancy and charm remains behind. The music of "Frivoli" is, save at rare moments, unoriginal, commonplace and dull. Especially notable is the weakness of the concerted numbers, the absence of a single well-developed finale in the course of three acts, and the entire lack of varied colour or device that characterises the instrumentation. Auber, indeed! Why, Lecocq, Planquette, and Audran have given us scores approaching infinitely nearer than this to the level of the composer who wrote "Le Domino Noir" and "Les Diamants de la Couronne." But, comparisons apart, "Frivoli" suffers from that worst of drawbacks in an opera of its class—a paucity of tuneful, catching melodies. The first act is particularly badly off in this respect. The chorus of the watch, "Whilst the town is sleeping," and that of the girls, "As through the fields we stray," are slightly effective; but the duets between the Duke and Duchess and the Chevalier and Rosella are utterly uninteresting, while Frivoli's couplets, "Voici la Pentecôte," are as feeble as Rosella's subsequent ballad is wanting in originality. Much better than these is Frivoli's song in the second act, "Happy thought;" the theme is piquant, and it has a pretty accompaniment in imitation of the mandoline. The music of the ballet and chorus that come later is by far the best in the opera. The clever lines of the drill chorus, "Shoulder arms," are set with some skill, two well-contrasted themes being here brought into combination. Striking also are the waltz in a minor key, and the bright concluding galop. But the quintet that follows is poor stuff, while the Count's song in the last act, "Fortune frail, changeful maid," owed more to Mr. Thorndike's artistic rendering than to any musical merit of its own.

Such are the salient features of M. Hervé's share in "Frivoli." In speaking of this before dealing with the story, I have reversed the proper order of things, but it matters little, seeing that that story plays a very insignificant part in the constitution of the piece. On the first night of its performance I failed, in common with many others, to make head or tail of the plot. Since then, however, the pruning-knife has been liberally used and several improvements have been introduced, with the effect of increasing the briskness and interest of the action. It is now possible to follow with tolerable facility the progress of the events that connect themselves in some fashion with Frivoli's career, from his blunders as valet to the Chevalier de Ligny and his useful pranks as an Austrian recruit, to his final identification, on amazingly slight evidence, as the long-lost son of the Duke di Begonia. The dialogue has been considerably altered, but I cannot perceive in the

fresh "jokes" a vast advance upon those that were there before. It is palpable that none of them emanate from the cultured and refined brain of Mr. Wm. Beatty-Kingston, who has written the lyrics with a degree of taste and skill which cannot be too warmly recognised. In having to fit English words to music already composed he was saddled with a most difficult and ungrateful task; so much the greater, therefore, the credit due to him for supplying rhythmical verses in which poetic fancy and a keen sense of humour enjoy perfectly free play. Some of the "sentimental" lines are really charming, while Krummbein's song and the solo stanzas for the leaders of the watch are in the best Gilbertian vein.

As regards the performance it will obviously be fairer for me to speak of things as they are than as they were. "Frivoli" now goes with no little spirit and *entrain;* the performers have fallen into their parts, and they not only do themselves justice but play more into each other's hands. Madame Rose Hersee, albeit not well suited to the title-rôle, enacts it with unflagging animation and conscientious art. Miss Marie Tempest shares with Mr. Thorndike the vocal honours of the representation, and next to these must rank Mr. H. Walsham, who is far superior, alike as a singer and an actor, to the gentleman he replaced. Miss Emily Soldene and Miss Kate Munroe make the most of their opportunities in parts of secondary importance. Upon Mr. Harry Nicholls and Mr. Robert Pateman chiefly depends the comic interest, and this they sustain with praiseworthy vigour and effect. Mr. Nicholls's appearance in the second act, from which he was originally withheld, tends to make this more than ever the liveliest section of the opera. The chorus is exceptionally numerous, comely, and efficient; the orchestra capable of doing justice to a much more exigent task than M. Hervé has allotted it. A word of eulogy for Mr. Oscar Barrett, the able conductor, and there remains only to speak of the glorious *mise en scène,* which, I protest, is beautiful enough to rescue from indifference a weaker musical dramatic production than "Frivoli." The ballets are simply exquisite; taste more admirable than has been shown in the elegant designs of the dresses, their delicate tints, the grouping and movements of the dancers, it would be impossible to imagine.

Hermann Klein.

Two or three concerts deserving of record in this place took place during the last few days of June—after the completion of my monthly musical budget—notably that of Madame Szarvády, a great and good pianist, formerly well-known to the London public by her maiden name of Wilhelmina Clauss. Thirty-four years have elapsed since she made her *début* in this metropolis, at a time when Arabella Goddard reigned (as a pianist) in our concert-rooms with undisputed sway; and the young Bohemian lady made so deep an impression upon English music-lovers by the intelligence and poetical feeling with which she interpreted the immortal works of Bach and Beethoven, as well as by a certain passionate impetuosity that characterised her rendering of technical difficulties, that soon after her first appearance in public our musical

dilettanti took arms, so to speak, under the respective banners of Clauss and Goddard, and waged as eager a factionary war throughout two or three seasons as that which subsequently broke up many family ties and old friendships in Berlin, when the rival claims to operatic supremacy of Pauline Lucca and Mathilde Mallinger were fiercely disputed, night after night, by their partisans on the Opernplatz. In 1852 Wilhelmina Clauss was the pet of Paris, and every whit as popular in London as she had been three years previously, when a quaint little girl of fifteen, at Leipzig and Dresden. Berlioz delighted in her playing, which he pronounced to be distinctly informed by genius; and our own great pianists, Sterndale Bennett and Lindsay Sloper, as I well remember, spoke with unbounded enthusiasm of her extraordinary musicality, according to her high rank amongst the most gifted executants of a period when Liszt was in the zenith of his glory, and Thalberg numbered his disciples by tens of thousands. In short, the sensation created in musical circles throughout Europe by Wilhelmina Clauss was uncommonly keen and vivacious, and maintained itself without the least abatement during the five years which comprised her starring career as a pianist. In 1857 she married M. Szarvády, a Hungarian painter or sculptor—I am not certain which of the two—and practically retired into private life, although she has over and over again since then been publicly heard in connection with works of charity. This year it has again been the privilege of English musicians to listen to her admirable playing, which, if it has lost some of its old fluency and impetuosity, is even more interesting, in at least one important respect, than it was thirty odd years ago. Madame Szarvády now displays a breadth of style and a ripe intellectuality of interpretation that were lacking to her performances in the "storm and stress" days of her high-spirited youth. Beethoven's inimitable "Moonlight Sonata" has had no more thoughtful and sympathetic exponent for many years than the gifted artiste who played it on June 29 at Lady Cowper's; nor is it possible to imagine anything at once more delicate and forcible than her rendering, on that occasion, of Schumann's fanciful "Carnaval," in the subtle humour of which Madame Szarvády manifestly revelled. I rejoice to learn that she intends to give a series of P.F. Recitals next season at St. James's Hall, and feel sure that musical London will accord to her the cordial welcome due to her great deserts.

Miss Olson, of the Royal Academy, whose "morning afternoon" also came off in the last week of the leafy month, is a pianist of promise, well versed in a comprehensive *répertoire* of standard pianoforte works by celebrated composers. She has been well taught, has studied assiduously, and deserves unstinted encouragement. Her playing of Mendelssohn's florid Fantasia in F Sharp Minor was especially excellent. Madame Thea Sanderini's *matinée musicale*, always an agreeable "event" of the London season, took place at St. James's Hall on June 28, and was well attended by many great ladies *de par le monde*. The talented *bénéficiaire* contributed three songs (two by Signor Denza) to the entertainment, besides taking part in several concerted pieces. Amongst the artistes by

whom she was supported were Mdlle. Le Brun, who, as usual, earned copious and well-merited applause; little Cesarino Galeotti, a marvellous boy-pianist; Signor de Cristofaro, whose dainty mandoline playing was much admired; Mdlle. Dufour, and Signori Rizzelli, De Valletta, Erba, and Romano. The amazing length of the programme was a somewhat distressing illustration of the old adage—"One may have too much of a good thing." There were two recitations of no inconsiderable duration, which might have been omitted with much comfort to the audience. "They'd never have been missed." Madame Sanderini will, I hope "contrive to do without 'em" next year; for recitations, in ten cases of twelve, are a deadly bore.

July, 1886, was by no means a propitious month to concert givers. The elections upset society, and sent thousands of persons belonging to the world of fashion prematurely out of town; the great cricket matches and the Henley celebrations were all huddled up together in a distracting manner; receptions and "at homes" were put off or cancelled altogether by the score; a great supplier of ready-made banquets to wealthy but cookless entertainers told me that forty dinners ordered at his establishment had been countermanded in one week; *bref*, the season broke up suddenly quite a fortnight before its time, and musical artistes of high merit who had hired concert-rooms, sent out their "small bills," and invested largely in advertisements, found themselves, in several cases, condemned to sing and play to half-empty benches, with a serious pecuniary loss staring them in the face. This was conspicuously the case with Signorina Alice Barbi, the best *cantatrice di camera* in Europe, whose two concerts of chamber-music at Prince's Hall—than which the musical season just concluded presented no features more interesting or attractions of a higher artistic order—were but slenderly, and, I fear, unremuneratively attended. I confess that the silence of my leading colleagues on the daily press with respect to these admirable entertainments appears to me inexplicable. Not only is Alice Barbi's singing an achievement of such absolute perfection in its kind as to be only approached in charm by the exquisite voice production of Diaz de Soria, but her programmes (on the occasions referred to) should have commanded the attention and attendance of the London musical public, illustrating, as they did with unusual comprehensiveness and felicity of selection, the development of vocal music from the 17th to the 19th century—from Astorga to Brahms—and including works of exceeding beauty by such composers as Paradisi, Caldara, Jomelli, Mozart, Rossini, Schubert, Gordigiani, Schumann, and Bizet, as well as by the two composers above named, who constitute the Alpha and Omega of Signorina Barbi's *répertoire*. All the laudatory adjectives in my vocabulary are insufficient to express my sense of the beauty, grace and poetical feeling characterising her rendering of these compositions, one and all. As she sang Astorga's sublime "Morir vogl' io" there was scarcely a dry eye amongst her audience. Alike in Schubert's passionate Lieder and in Gordigiani's plaintive *stornelli* she displayed an incomparable *slancio* and tenderness. Such singing as this

is the outcome of a rare and surprising combination of natural gifts and indefatigable cultivation. The pity of it was that so few of those amongst us who are fully qualified to appreciate it were gathered on the 12th and 17th inst. to listen to it. Were London society really as musical as it pretends to be, the hall in which those admirable entertainments were given would not have been large enough to contain the audiences that would have flocked to its doors in response to Signorina Barbi's public announcements. That such was not the case is a grave reproach to this metropolis. The inimitable vocalist, I should mention, was ably supported by Signor Cesi, who performed with remarkable versatility a large number of pianoforte *morçeaux*, including works by Frescobaldi, Scarlatti, Martini, Boccherini and Clementi, Couperin and Rameau, Handel, Bach, Graun, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, Rubinstein, Henselt and Thalberg.

Twice during the past month Madame Patti-Nicolini sang at the Albert Hall, and once she appeared on the boards of Drury Lane in the character of Rosina for the benefit of her old friend and impresario, Colonel James Mapleson. Need I say that she filled the huge amphitheatre at Kensington and the capacious national theatre with throngs of her enthusiastic admirers, or that her singing and acting were all that ear and eye could desire them to be? I trow not; for the whole musical world knows what she can do, and she has never done it better than of late, her voice being in superb form and her charms of appearance and manner no less fascinating than they were a quarter of a century ago. Signor Nicolini, too, sustained the florid part of Almaviva with all his old *verve*, spirit, and vocal flexibility, and Signor del Puente sang and acted Figaro to general admiration. On July 5th, Mdlle. Pacini gave a "morning concert" (in the afternoon, of course) at Mrs. Reuben Sassoon's, assisted by an unusually strong cast of drawing-room vocalists, each one quite first-class of his or her sort. Haydn's famous Canzonet was sung with irreproachable taste by Madame Marshall, a newly imported ornament to London concert-rooms. In duets by Midor and Lenepveu, Madame Conneau and M. de Soria aroused a very genuine and demonstrative enthusiasm in their audience, although its predominating elements were rank and fashion, which in this country are accustomed to observe a phlegmatic attitude towards the performances of musical and dramatic artistes. The *bénéficiaire* played brilliantly in conjunction with Signor Albanesi, the daintiest of contemporary pianists; and Mesdames Barety and Marion, and M. Pierre Berton of the Paris Vaudeville, varied the entertainment most agreeably by their excellent performance of a sparkling little French *comédie de salon*. On the 8th ult. Mdlle. Thérèse Castellan's annual concert came off with great *éclat* at Lady Goldsmid's townhouse, the spacious salons of which were crowded by wealthy and distinguished musical amateurs, attracted by the well-established reputation of the concert giver as a first-class violinist, and by a very interesting and judiciously arranged programme. Several artistes of conspicuous merit took part in the entertainment, the most

salient feature of which, however, was Mdlle. Castellan's delightful playing, distinguished from that of so many contemporary violin-soloists by her feathery lightness of touch and charming delicacy of accent. Not that her playing is deficient in breadth or impressiveness; on the contrary, her *coup d'archet* is masculine in its vigour, and her tone superb. But it is above all her dapper phrasing that more particularly refreshes the ear and satisfies the judgment, being, as it unquestionably is, the dainty offspring of highly finished *technique* and keen musical intelligence. Mrs. Gilbert Campbell (*née* Ellen de Fonblanque) sang "Orpheus and his Lute" as no other living chamber-vocalist can sing that enchanting composition; Eric Lewis convulsed his hearers with laughter by his quaint delivery of a musical sketch entitled "Song à la mode;" Eugene Oudin, who has achieved a great musico-social success this season in what the immortal De La Pluche was pleased to style "the hupper suckles," displayed his fine baritone voice in pleasant lays by Sullivan and Bizet; little Galeotti played something astonishingly difficult by Saint-Saëns; Miss Elliott and Miss Myers sang a few of my friend Denza's songs, the name of which is legion; and Mdlle. Thénard and M. Mayer performed the gay little *saynéte* "Le Collectioneur" with refreshing spirt and frivolity. Everybody present with whom I spoke on the subject of the entertainment said that they had never spent a July afternoon in London more agreeably.

At the Novelty Theatre, on the 14th and 16th ult., were given two meritorious performances of an original English opera, in four acts, called "Florian," the "book" of which is by D. Latham and the music by Ida Walter. The cast was a strong one, including Miss Griswold, Mr. Ben Davies, and Miss Burgon; the orchestra was ably conducted by the Chevalier Ganz; and the opera was prettily set, mounted, and dressed. Miss Walter possesses the melodic gift, and writes very pleasantly for the instruments. Several of her vocal numbers are very pretty and taking; I may mention in particular the song "How Lovely is the Gleeman's Life" (Act I.), excellently rendered by Mr. Davies; "Under the Linden Trees" (Act II.), Miss Griswold's ably-sung solo; "Love is but Vain," a ballad assigned to Mr. Davies; "Ah! Why to dim" and "All may Dance" (Act III.), two tuneful ditties, well given by Misses Griswold and Dickerson; and a robust drinking-song, "Let the Feast be Crowned," vigorously declaimed by Mr. Max Eugene, with a *refrain en chœur*. There is not much plot in "Florian," and some of the verses appertaining to its libretto would be stronger were they unsparingly pruned of confused imagery and inapt adjectives. But on the whole the work does some credit to those concerned in its construction and production alike, and was very warmly received by audiences of a highly intellectual and artistic character. I sincerely wish Miss Walter success in her further efforts to enrich our national store of lyric dramas. She, at least, writes organic tunes—not endless melodies; and we should be grateful to her for directing her inspirations so wisely.

Amongst the musical publications forwarded to me in the course of the past month were a new song by Signor G. Gariboldi, called "Morrò d'Amore," a pretty little stornello, which ought to achieve a fair drawing-room success; a simple and plaintive setting of Lord Byron's words, "The Kiss, Dear Love," by Countess Ali Sadowska, proving that this gifted lady can compose cleverly as well as sing and recite in a dozen modern languages; "That Word of Words," in which a charming melody by Mr. W. Fullerton is deftly fitted to Miss Madge Dixon's unsophisticated verses; and four songs by Signor Angelo Samuelli, respectively intituled "L'Organetto," "Aubade," "No Longer," and "You Know" (the last two published by Ascherberg and Co., Regent Street), all of which are tuneful and well-written for the voice. "No Longer" and "Aubade" should become popular, if they met with their deserts. I have also received three very beautiful photographs of Miss Ellen Terry from Mr. Barraud, taken quite recently, and especially remarkable for their lifelike resemblance to the actress whom all the world admires, as well as for the unconventional character of the accessories introduced into each picture. These portraits accurately represent Miss Terry "in her habit as she lives," and are, on that account, so generally interesting to votaries of all the arts that I need not apologise to the readers of The Theatre for squeezing a brief mention of them into my "Musical-Box."

Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

Our Play-Box.

"NANCY AND COMPANY."

A new farcical piece, in four acts, "adapted and augmented" by Augustin Daly from the German of Julius Rosen.

Produced, for the first time in England, at the Strand Theatre, on Wednesday, July 7, 1886,

Mr. Ebenezer Griffing.....	Mr. James Lewis.	Mrs. Huldah Dangery.....	Mrs. G. H. Gilbert.
Kiefe O'Kiefe, Esq.	Mr. John Drew.	Oriana	Miss Virginia Dreher.
Captain Paul Renseller ...	Mr. Otis Skinner.	Daisy Griffing	Miss Edith Kingdon.
Mr. Sykes Stockslow	Mr. George Parkes.	Betsy	Miss May Irwin.
Tippy Brasher	Mr. William Gilbert.	Nancy Brasher	Miss Ada Rehan.
Julius	Mr. John Wood.		

The greatest recommendation that a play can have in managerial eyes is that it should have gone through the ordeal of production in another language—that it should, in short, be an adaptation. Thus, then, our dramatists industriously pillage from the French, and adapt rollicking and dirty farces for the Criterion, or more serious plays, which, as Sydney Smith said of Delphine, "shed a mild lustre over adultery," for the St. James's. Of late, too, the German stage has been laid under contribution, and a number of farcical pieces have been adapted, which, while lacking the French neatness of construction, have the merit of being perfectly harmless. The latest addition to the list is "Nancy and Company," an adaptation, by Mr. Daly, of a farce by Julius Rosen, which has been given at the Strand Theatre. The piece has a very improbable story, while the dialogue, though here and there comic enough, has not the constant fire of witticisms as in some of the farcical comedies of our own authors. The adapter also is too fond of bringing down his curtain on bustling and noisy situations which are pantomimic rather than farcical, but the piece, well played by Mr. Daly's capable comedians, certainly provokes much laughter. The heroine, Mrs. Nancy Brasher, is a very impulsive young person who has written a play in conjunction with a dramatic author, Mr. O'Kiefe. She has moreover, though for no conceivable reason, kept the matter a secret from her husband. O'Kiefe is, strange to say, living in the house of a Mr. Griffing, whose niece he desires to marry, and the old gentleman, who has been very gay in his youth, keeps watch over O'Kiefe, to see if he is steady enough to be rewarded with the young lady's hand. Thus, when Mrs. Nancy appears in New York bent on witnessing the first representation of the play, and insists on O'Kiefe going with her, and takes him to the hotel where she is staying, calling herself Mrs. O'Kiefe, the unhappy man is in a sad quandary. As Mr. Brasher and all the other characters also appear, the confusion produced is of the kind familiar in such pieces, and we have number of amusing situations. It is obvious, of course, all along that

one word of explanation would set matters right, but Mrs. Nancy will not allow it until the play has been produced. At length the eventful night arrives, the play by Nancy and her distracted "Co." is a great success, and among the most enthusiastic of the audience is her husband, Mr. Tippy Brasher, who overwhelms the authoress with bouquets. Then all ends happily in a somewhat conventional fashion. It should be said also that old Griffing has a daughter who wishes to marry a military man, while her father desires her to espouse a young swell, or "dude," as New York slang has it, but the affairs of these people arouse only a languid interest. The shortcomings of the farce would be more apparent in the hands of less experienced players than the members of Mr. Daly's company, but as played by them it is undoubtedly amusing. Mr. Daly's comedians have been said, and with some justice, to be what the French call a *troupe d'ensemble*, and they certainly play together admirably, with equal spirit and finish. Miss Ada Rehan's Nancy Brasher is a very bright and effective bit of stage work, and she is the centre of interest whenever she appears. Mrs. G. H. Gilbert has very little to do as an old aunt who is called "a species of safe deposit company for a valuable niece," but she does that little very neatly. Miss Dreher and Miss Kingdon are capable representatives of Mr. Griffings niece and daughter, while Messrs. Drew and Skinner play with spirit as the lovers. Mr. Gilbert's Tippy Brasher may be heartily commended, and Mr. Parkes, though he possibly overdoes the imbecility of the "dude," is very amusing. The part of old Griffing is capitally acted by Mr. James Lewis; the character is a hackneyed one, but the comedian's method makes it seem almost new to us. "Nancy and Company" was received with much laughter and applause, but one would like to see this capital company in a play more worthy of their abilities.

H. Savile Clarke.

Our Omnibus-Box.

The summer season of 1886 will be remembered amongst many other pleasant things for that agreeable interlude when Henry Irving went down to Oxford at the request of the Vice-Chancellor to lecture on the Drama to the members of that ancient and hospitable University. This, it will be remembered, is the third time that the popular actor has discussed his art in the presence of a University audience. The first occasion was some years ago at Trinity College, Dublin, whose graduates and undergraduates were among Mr. Irving's most cordial and sincere admirers. The second time was at Harvard University, during Mr. Irving's second American tour; and the third was at Oxford, at the new University Schools in the High Street. It is a mistake to suppose that the Sheldonian Theatre was ever refused for the purposes of Mr. Irving's lecture. He might have appeared there had it not been considered that the handsome new University Schools was a more fitting place for the brilliant assembly that was certain to gather together to do honour to this most respected and generally popular artist. It is quite certain that nothing could have been better managed. Mr. Irving was the guest of Mr. Jowett, the Master of Balliol, and the then Vice-Chancellor of the University, and was by him and the University Proctors and the leading heads of houses escorted to the rostrum, from which he lectured to one of the most representative audiences that could have been selected from the University. All prejudices were put aside, and all did their utmost to make the occasion dignified and noteworthy. The lecture itself, as our readers very well know—for it is printed and is, of course, in the hands of all dramatic students, and safely stored on the shelves of all dramatic libraries—was an interesting and eloquent summary of the lives of the four celebrated actors—Burbage, Betterton, David Garrick, and Edmund Kean. The interest of the subject was progressive and the attention of all was keenly stimulated until the very end. As to the manner of the delivery of the lecture there is no need to speak. It was in Mr. Irving's very best and most characteristic style. But few expected the treat that was to follow. To the surprise of everyone, Mr. Jowett, in his vote of thanks to Mr. Irving, indulged in an eloquent and interesting defence of the drama. It was, it is needless to state, learned, appropriate, and scholarly. This done, the Vice-Chancellor introduced his "young friends," as

he called them, and the leading representatives of undergraduate life in the matter of literature, art, the drama, and athletics, presented Mr. Irving publicly with an illuminated address extolling his merits, and a life of Shakespeare, handsomely bound, as a keepsake. Then came the cheers that are only heard with such force and earnestness at public schools or Universities, and the interesting evening came to an end. During his visit to Oxford Mr. Irving was hospitably entertained at several of the Colleges, and had an opportunity of attending one of the celebrated Sunday evening concerts at Balliol that owe their success to the dominant influence of Mr. Jowett and the artistic enthusiasm of Mr. John Farmer, who has left Harrow and its pleasant associations to identify himself with Oxford and University life.

Surely a great deal of exaggerated and irreparable nonsense has appeared in several American papers concerning the reception of several companies of American actors and artists in London. According to these silly communications a London theatre would appear to be a kind of bear-pit echoing with savage growls, and with fair play consistently denied to all artists who are not of English origin. All this is absolutely and palpably untrue. The excellent comedy company of Mr. Daly has from the very first been received with marked courtesy and unusual enthusiasm. I don't believe there is a single member of Mr. Daly's company who would endorse one isolated word that has been spoken concerning the unfairness of English audiences. I should very much like to know in what country in the world they are likely to play to more appreciative and enthusiastic people, than have welcomed them at the Strand exactly as they welcomed them two years ago at Toole's Theatre. Mr. Dixey and his companions were taken for exactly what they were worth. They came with a bad, rubbishy play and a clever young actor. The play was condemned, as it deserved to be, for it was trash; the actor has been applauded and fêted, extolled and written about even extravagantly, although his great success was made in an imitation of one of the most respected actors in England. Mr. Dixey's Irving imitation is talked about everywhere. People have been to the Gaiety to see that and not the play called "Adonis," which was all very well in its way, but was found unpalatable here, where that kind of aimless, formless, and witless burlesque has been done to death. But surely there has been no need to stretch international courtesy by praising entertainments that have no standing or character in their own country. Why should London playgoers be asked to go and see what is intrinsically foolish and artistically bad. It is not enough in London to placard an American company in order to draw a crowd. But good American art is as welcome here as is the art of any country under the sun. Send us a Jefferson, a Salvini, a Bernhardt, a Hading, or a Delaunay, and we are not likely to reject them because they are *not*

English, you know. In all my experience of the stage I have never yet seen one generous artist ostracised or disheartened after a trial trip in London. Although many of us differed in the estimate of the capabilities of the many actors and actresses sent over from America surely Florence, Owens, McCullough, Emmett, Edwin Booth, Laurence Barrett, and Mary Anderson had never to complain of discourtesy in their treatment on this side of the Atlantic. They were criticised, but, it is to be hoped, temperately and fairly; and yet some of the American papers overflow with indignation because English audiences have not the patience to sit out the plays produced occasionally by managers who have no standing in their own country, and performed by artists who have yet to distinguish themselves.

Under the stage-management of Mr. R. Markby, the Gem A.D.C. gave a very successful performance at St. George's Hall, June 22nd. The entertainment was given in aid of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants. First and foremost the Cassidy of Mr. Carrick stood out as an excellent piece of character-acting; Irish parts are a speciality of Mr. Carrick, who on this occasion proved that he could show feeling as well as humour. Mr. Percy Clark was very good as Lionel Leveret, not overdoing his part; and Mr. H. Bute also rendered good service as Captain McTavish. Mr. G. Cusack-Smith was fearfully amateurish, and Mr. H. G. Griffinhoofe did not know his words. The ladies scored high: Miss Dora Burley made a capital Mrs. Major Moss, though in the first act the business with the umbrella was not in good taste. Mary Moss had a most suitable representative in Miss Gertrude Findon, a young lady who always shows much earnestness. For the character of Kate McTavish the Gem had the professional aid of Mrs. W. Morland, who gave an excellent delineation of the part. The evening closed with G. C. Herbert's charming comedietta, "Second Thoughts," acted to perfection. Mrs. W. Morland as Helen Cliveden pleased everyone by the refinement and grace of her acting, the true womanly feeling which underlies the "chaff" of the character was well indicated, and her interpretation was most sympathetic. Miss Dora Burley was a first-rate Mrs. McSharon; she brought out all the points of this ridiculous old beauty with an admirable humour. No better exponent of Sir Herbert Mervyn could have been found than Mr. J. G. Meade; once more he proved himself to be a most clever comedian. Mr. Meade never falls into the amateur's chief fault of being inaudible; his rich voice is always heard distinctly, and his great ease of manner is of the greatest service to his excellent acting. The Enterpean Amateur Orchestra gave some good music during the centre acts.

By kind permission of Major and Mrs. Wallace Carpenter, Signor De Cristofaro gave a "Matinée Musicale" at Ashley Place, July 13th.

Signor Cristofaro is an excellent mandolinist, and the most interesting items of the concert were two mandolino soli, given for the first time. "Bolero" (De Cristofaro) is an effective piece; but the new valse arranged by him on Denza's charming song, "Under Green Leaves" is especially pleasing, and proved a great success; exceedingly well played and accompanied by Signor Denza, it gained a hearty encore. The only other encore during the afternoon was reaped by Denza's "Good Morrow." It was nicely sung by Miss Adele Myers, but it was most evident that it was the song which the audience wanted to hear again: it is pretty and uncommon. "Marechiaro," by Tosti, also deserves a special word of commendation; this Neapolitan song, which has all the character of Arab music, is very good and pretty; it was sung by Signor Finelli de Valletta. This, like the strains of the mandoline (an instrument much loved by the Arabs) found a fitting home in the beautiful Moorish Hall, where the concert took place. Master Cesarino Galeotti gave some excellent pianoforte playing; and the other artistes were Mdlle. Dufour, Madame Thea Lauderini, Signor Erba, and Signor Romili. The attendance was good; the audience evidently pleased with their afternoon's entertainment.

All who are off for their hard-earned holidays should put in their pockets for light reading "The River of Life," a London romance, by John Latey, junior, the clever son of the accomplished and veteran poet and editor of "The Illustrated London News." It is just the book to beguile a long railway journey, or to put in the pocket when idling on a sea-side cliff in summer weather.

Our photographic portraits this month represent Lady Monckton in the character of the injured wife in Sir Charles Young's play of "Jim the Penman," and those exceedingly clever players from America, Mr. James Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert, in "A Night Off."—The new Drury Lane drama will be produced before the end of August.—Many of our readers will be glad to know that when the regular season at the Haymarket commences in September the part of James Ralston, *alias* Jim the Penman, will be acted by Mr. E. S. Willard, who has severed his long connection with Mr. Wilson Barratt.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from June 22 to July 20, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

London:

June 29 "Frivoli." Comic opera, in three acts; lyrics by William Beatty-Kingston; music by Hervé. Drury Lane Theatre.

" " "Caught." Comedy, in three acts; adapted by Stanislaus Calhaem; and "The Royal Berkshire Regiment." Drama, in one act, by H. T. Van Laun and Felix Rémo. Comedy Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

June 30 "Hazel Kirke." Domestic drama, in four acts, by Steel Mackaye. Vaudeville Theatre. (Matinée—first performance in London.

July 3 "The Little Pilgrim." Drama, in two acts, adapted from Ouida's "Two Little Wooden Shoes," by W. G. Wills; and "Life's Martyrdom." A tragedy, in one act; by Alfred C. Calmour. Criterion Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, 7 "Nancy and Co." Farcical play, in four acts; adapted and augmented from the German, by Augustin Daly. Strand Theatre. (First performance in London.)

,, 20 "Nellie's Flight." Comedy, in three acts; by Sutherland Edwards and Brandon Thomas. Crystal Palace. (Matinée—single performance.)

Provinces:

June 28 "Helter Skelter." Farcical play, in four acts; by Walter Brown. Alexandra Theatre, Sheffield.

July 8 "The Gold Slave." Drama, in five acts; by T. G. Barclay. Theatre Royal, Longton.

,, 14 "Bank Holiday." Comedy-drama, in two acts; by Herbert B. Cooper. Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool.

Paris:

June 16* "Le Voyage en Chine," comic opera in three acts, by MM. Eugène Labiche and Alfred Delacour, music by M. François Bazin. Château d'Eau.

,, 16* "Les Rameaux," by M. Faure. Château d'Eau.

,, 22 "La Sortie de Saint-Cyr," comedy in one act, by M. Eugène Verconsin. Théâtre Français.

,, 22* "Zaïre," tragedy in five acts, by Voltaire. Théâtre Français.

,, 23* "Lucie de Lammermoor," comic opera in four acts by Donizetti. Château d'Eau.

,, 25 "Les Hommes qui ne fument pas," comedy in one act, by M. Gaston-Peloux. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 30* "Les Fâcheux," three-act comedy in prose, by Molière. Théâtre Français.

July 5 "Les Bottes," vaudeville in one act, by M. Victor Kervain. Château d'Eau.

,, 7* "Martha," opera in four acts and six tableaux, libretto by M. de Saint-Georges and music by Flotow. Château d'Eau.

,, 12* "Le Vieux Caporal," drama in five acts, by MM. d'Ennery and Dumanoir. Ambigu.

,, 20* "Don Pasquale," comic opera in three acts, libretto by MM. A. Royer and G. Vaez, music by Donizetti. Château d'Eau.

Dear Lady Disdain.

"What! my dear Lady Disdain, are you still living?"—SHAKESPEARE.

I.

SHE'S a sweet little damsel of twenty,
A mixture of sadness and fun;
Of lovers I know she has plenty—
This sorrowful rhymer is one.
And if upon me she'd take pity,
My highest delight I'd attain,
For I'm but a clerk in the City,
And she is—dear Lady Disdain.

II.

I know very well she's above me,
As far as the sun or the moon;
To think such an angel could love me
Would be far too much of a boon.
If I wrote her an amorous ditty,
She'd burn it, I know, in a flame,
For I'm but a clerk in the City,
And she is—dear Lady Disdain.

III.

I think of her when I am writing
Or poring o'er some legal flaw,
When Blackstone my eye is inviting,
She comes betwixt me and his law.
I dream over pages of Chitty,
Till to shut up the book I am fain,
For I'm but a clerk in the City,
And she is—dear Lady Disdain.

IV.

Alas! this sweet dreaming is idle—
It is for the moon that I sigh—
The bells ring aloud for her bridal
With one who is richer than I.
Yet she is so dainty and pretty,
That Queen of my heart she must reign,
Tho' I'm but a clerk in the City,
And she is—dear Lady Disdain.

FERGUS W. HUME.

THE THEATRE.

First Appearances.

JOHN AND FANNY KEMBLE.

By Percy Fitzgerald.

It must be a curious reflection for the veteran amateur who still recalls the triumphs of the "glorious John" to think that this unapproachable hero made his earliest appearance on any stage, some hundred and twenty years ago. A short time since, the present writer spent an hour in company with one of the most interesting of these reminiscents, who with much energy and dramatic propriety called up the great actor before us, and gave the happiest imitation of the style and interpretation of this eminent player, from which one could gather that there was a greater realism and humanity in his playing than is popularly supposed. It may, indeed, be said, *en passant*, that neither realism nor pure classicalism is the proper interpretation, but a something between—a picture of nature, but refined and elevated. In this *juste milieu* lies the perfect charm of the Elgin marbles and of true sculpture.

His father, the well-known Roger Kemble, directed a "poorish" theatre at Worcester, very much as on the principles that influenced Mr. Crummles in the story. He utilised all his family, as will be seen from the following two bills:—

Worcester, February 12, 1767.

Mr. Kemble's Company of Comedians.

At the Theatre at the King's Head, this evening, will be performed a Concert of music, to begin exactly at six o'clock.

Tickets to be had at the usual Places.

Between the Parts of the Concert will be presented, *gratis*, A celebrated Historical Play (*never performed here*) called

CHARLES THE FIRST,

The Characters to be dressed in Antient Habits, according to the fashion of those times.

The part of King Charles, Mr. Jones;
Duke of Richmond, Mr. Siddons;
Marquis of Lindsey, Mr. Salisbury;
Bishop Juxon, Mr. Fowler;
General Fairfax, Mr. Kemble;
Colonel Ireton, Mr. Crump;
Colonel Tomlinson, Mr. Hughes;
The part of Oliver Cromwell, Mr. Vaughan;
Servant, Mr. Butler;
James Duke of York (afterwards King of England),
Master J. Kemble;
The Duke of Gloucester (King Charles's younger Son),
Miss Fanny Kemble;
Serjeant Bradshaw (Judge of the pretended High Court of Justice),
Mr. Burton;
The Young Princess Elizabeth, Miss Kemble;
Lady Fairfax, Mrs. Kemble;
The Part of the Queen, Mrs. Vaughan.
Singing between the Acts by Mrs. Fowler and Miss Kemble.
To which will be added a Comedy, called

THE MINOR.

And on Saturday next, the 14th inst., will be again presented the above Tragedy, with a Farce that will be expressed in the Bills for the day.

*** The days of Performance are Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

John Kemble, then about ten years old, it will be noted, was described here as "Master J. Kemble," but in a few weeks became "Mr. Kemble."

No probationer could have worked harder, and went through such privations, but the seventeen years' "grinding" of provincial practice he "enjoyed" was of the most signal and valuable use. This training, alas! modern actors seem, in the future, never destined to benefit by.

Worcester, April 16th, 1767.

Mr. Kemble's Company of Comedians.

At the Theatre at the King's Head, on Monday evening next, being the 20th of April instant, will be performed a Concert of Musick, to begin at exactly half-an-hour after six o'clock. Tickets to be had at the usual places. Between the parts of the Concert will be presented, *gratis*, a celebrated Comedy, called

The TEMPEST; or the Inchanted Island.
(As altered from Shakespeare by Mr. Dryden and Sir W. D'Avenant.)
With all the Scenery, Machinery, Musick, Monsters,
and other
Decorations proper to the piece, entirely new.
Alonzo (Duke of Mantua), Mr. Kemble.
Hyppolito (a Youth who never saw a Woman), Mr. Siddons.
Stephano (Master of the Duke's Ship), Mr. Kemble.
Amphitrite by Mrs. Kemble.
Ariel (the Chief Spirit) by Miss Kemble.
And Milcha by Miss F. Kemble.

The performances will open with a Representation of a Tempestuous Sea (in perpetual agitation) and Storm, in which the Usurper's Ship is Wrecked; the Wreck ends with a Beautiful Shower of Fire.—And the whole to conclude with a Calm Sea, on which appears Neptune, Poetick God of the Ocean, and his Royal Consort Amphitrite, in a Chariot drawn by Sea-horses, accompanied with Mermaids, Tritons, &c.

In his early days, John Kemble, the gifted brother of a gifted sister, was of a formal, but withal correct, safe temperament, neither likely to succeed, nor to fail greatly. He showed very much the same steady perseverance, that "biding of one's time," and confidence in oneself, which is one of the grand elements of signal success, and which so distinguishes the great actor of our day, Henry Irving. Like his sister, he was trained in a strolling corps, and on the boards of small provincial houses, so that he made no formal first appearance, nor challenged a legitimate public verdict until he came to London. His first serious trials, however, were on the boards of the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin. He made a very great sensation, playing a round of characters, and, therefore, his various new readings and scholarly interpretation excited the curiosity and admiration of the judicious. There arose much discussion over young Mr. Kemble's interpretation, and the impression he made travelled before him to town. When the time, therefore, came for his attempt in London, he was considered to be a player whose ability was sufficiently recognised, and there was nothing in peril. Hence, his "first appearance" had none of the romance and uncertainty which waited on others of the kind.

The night was September 30, 1783, and the play chosen was "Hamlet." The bill was as follows:—

By His Majesty's Company,
At the THEATRE ROYAL in DRURY LANE,
This present TUESDAY, September 30, 1783,

HAMLET

(As originally written by Shakespeare).

Hamlet, by Mr. Kemble

(From the Theatre Royal, Dublin, being his first Appearance upon this Stage).

King, by Mr. Packer;
Horatio, by Mr. Farren;
Polonius, by Mr. Baddeley;
Laertes, by Mr. Barrymore;
Osrick, by Mr. R. Palmer;
Rosencrans, by Mr. Phillimore;
Guildenstern, by Mr. Williams;
Marcellus, Mr. Wrighten; Francisco, Mr. Waldron;
Gravediggers, by Mr. Parsons and Mr. Burton;
And the Ghost, by Mr. Bensley;
Ophelia, by Miss Field;
Player Queen, by Mrs. Hedges;
And the Queen, by Mrs. Hopkins.

To which will be added

THE QUAKER.

Lubin, by Mr. Suett;
Solomon, by Mr. Parsons;
Easy, by Mr. Wrighten;
And Steady, by Mr. Staunton;
Gillian, by Miss Field;
Cicely, by Mrs. Love;
And Floretta, by Mrs. Wrighten.

Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. Fosbrook at the Stage Door.
*** The Doors will be opened at Half after Five o'clock,
To begin at Half after Six. *Vivant* Rex et Regina.

There was no tumultuous success or acclaiming of a new glory for the stage. It was felt that they were in presence of a well-trained and well-graced actor, judicious, and who made every step safe before he took it. John Taylor was present, and noticed the almost laboured character of his performance—while most of the critics dwelt on the abundant "new readings," which were really the feature of his performances, to say nothing of certain oddities, such as "A lee—tle pipe," and the "strucken deer." He was pronounced on the whole to be a very painstaking and interesting young man, of gentlemanly and even handsome presence, though his courtesies were too elaborate. With this modest beginning set in the career of this remarkable performer, who was destined to have an extraordinary influence on the English stage,

forming a school of his own and taking the very first place in his generation.

The well-known "Conversation" Sharpe was present, and wrote to his friend Henderson a thoughtful and judicious critique of the performance:—"I went, as I promised, to see the new Hamlet, whose provincial fame has excited your curiosity as well as mine. There has not been such a first appearance since yours; yet Nature, though she has been bountiful to him in figure and feature, has denied him a voice. Of course he could not exemplify his own direction for the players to 'speak the speech trippingly on the tongue,' and now and then he was as deliberate in his delivery as if he had been reading prayers and had waited for the response. He is a very handsome man, almost tall and almost large, with features of a sensible but fixed and tragic caste. His action is graceful though somewhat formal. Very careful study appears in all he says and all he does, but there is more singularity and ingenuity than simplicity and fire. Upon the whole he strikes me as rather a finished French performer, than as a varied and vigorous actor."

It is curious to think that there is strictly but one recorded instance on the English stage of a first appearance, brilliantly successful; where the candidate has stepped from private life to the stage, without preparatory experience in the provinces or training. This favoured exception is offered by an artist happily now among us: a member of the gifted Kemble family—the niece of the famous John and Sarah—Fanny Kemble, in short. There is something very pretty and touching in the story as she herself relates it, for there is in the venture a display of filial devotion and self-sacrifice offered at an almost desperate crisis, a sacrifice which it is pleasing to find was crowned on the instant with completest success. When it is thought what were the difficulties to be surmounted, the vast size of the theatre, the nervousness, the shyness of extreme youth, the supreme ignorance of all rules of the art, the success becomes really a phenomenon, and one worthy to be recorded among the exceptional feats of those who essay—so often with failure—the difficult feat of "opening the world's oyster" at a moment's notice.

When John Kemble retired to Lausanne to close his life, he handed over his share in the great theatre of Covent Garden to his brother Charles, who for many years maintained a hopeless

struggle against adverse fortune, the house sinking gradually into a worse and worse condition of debt and embarrassment. In the year 1829, matters had become almost desperate. There was an enormous debt of about £80,000; no one attended to see the plays for payment, and in two months the unprecedented number of eleven thousand orders were issued! According to Mr. Bunn, the gay manager, who was of rather epicurean tastes, did not distress himself as to the disastrous state of the enterprise; nor did he abridge his pleasures. He and his family are described as taking their daily rides in the Park. In the midst of this pressure he set off to fulfil an engagement in Dublin, leaving his wife and his daughter, a bright, handsome, and interesting girl, behind him to look after the theatre. The latter noted her mother's growing depression as the dangers and difficulties increased. Fanny Kemble was then a bright and thoughtful creature, with a singular power of interesting people. She had already, by correspondence, reading, and study, created a little world for herself, and nearly every one she met was interested in, and wished to see again, the daughter of Charles Kemble. A few years ago, when grown a veteran lady, the memories of these old days came back upon her and prompted her to take up her pen and record their impression. This she has done in a charming, vivacious, and picturesque style.

It was in the autumn of 1829, she tells us, that the affairs of the theatre came to a crisis. Her mother coming in one day threw herself into a chair and burst into tears. "Oh! it has come at last," she cried, "our property is to be sold!" She described how she had seen the walls covered with placards and bills of sale. A distraint, it seems, had been put in for the "King's taxes," and it shows how utterly denuded the resources of the establishment were, when matters had come to that pass. These amiable women only felt for the humble creatures who were dependent on the theatre. There were over seven hundred persons employed, besides an army of supernumeraries engaged on special occasions, and the thought that these poor people would be turned adrift without employment distressed them exceedingly. Seized with a sort of terror the young girl tried to comfort her mother, and with more affection than knowledge of the world wrote to her father by that post begging him to let her go and "earn her bread" as a governess. This scheme seemed to suggest an idea to the mother, who

next day asked her did she think she had any talent for the stage. "I could only answer with as much perplexity as good faith, that I had not the slightest idea whether I had or not."

Her mother begged of her to learn some part and say it to her, and Fanny chose Portia, and recited it. Mrs. Kemble, however, thought there was not sufficient passion in the character to be a test, and suggested Juliet. Her daughter patiently learned the part by heart, and recited it, while her mother again listened without making criticism. But her father had now returned, and one evening the young girl was asked to stand up before them both, and recite her Juliet, which she did "with indescribable trepidation." "They neither of them said anything," the simple, unaffected narrative goes on, "beyond 'Very well, very nicely, my dear,' with many kisses and caresses, from which I escaped to sit down on the stairs, and get rid of the suppressed nervous fears I had struggled with;" all which was done, as it is told, in a natural, unaffected way, with the wish of doing something to please her parents. But now was to come a surprise. The parents judiciously said nothing to her on the subject, but a few days later her father took her down to the theatre to try if her voice was strong enough to fill so great a space. She describes the first impression of the house—"That strange-looking place the stage, with its racks of pasteboard and canvas—streets, forests, dungeons—was empty and silent. In front, the great amphitheatre, equally empty and silent, wrapped in its grey holland covers, would have been absolutely dark but for a long, sharp, thin shaft of light that darted here and there from some light above me. Set down in the middle of twilight space, with only my father's voice coming to me from where he stood, hardly distinguishable in the gloom, I was seized with the spirit of the thing. My voice sounded through the great vault above and before me, and, completely carried away by the inspiration of the wonderful play, I acted Juliet as I do not believe I ever acted it again." The judicious father, without telling her, had posted a critical and experienced friend, one Major D., a man about town, and a good actor himself, in the dark recesses of one of the boxes, and he heard the whole trial, unknown to the young postulant.

"Bring her out at once!" was his opinion; "it will be a great success."

This step it was determined to take, and within the short space of three weeks. During that time she had to learn everything—the "business," walk, the elocution. The preparations were hurried on. A stiff and rather mature Romeo was found in Mr. Abbott, a respectable actor; and, to honour the occasion, her mother, the former piquant Miss De Camp, was to return to the stage for the occasion, while her father was to support the play with his unapproachable Mercutio. On principle, this clever, judicious girl determined that there should be no interruption of her regular studies and pursuits, rightly conceiving that this would diminish the nervousness attendant on the trial. On the day of her first appearance she had no rehearsal, so as to avoid fatigue, practised on the piano, as usual, and spent the morning reading "Blunt's Scripture Characters," which she remembers "quite absorbed her," possibly from the nervous tension of her mind.

At last the momentous hour arrived. "We drove to the theatre very early indeed, while the late autumn sunlight yet lingered in the sky, and as I screened my eyes from it my mother said, 'Heaven smiles on you, my child.'" An immense audience, filling the place to the roof, was gathered, and scanning this old "silver paper" bill, now gone for ever:—

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.
The public is respectfully informed that this Theatre
WILL BE OPENED
On MONDAY Next, October 5, 1829,
When will be performed Shakespeare's Tragedy of
ROMEO AND JULIET.
Prince Escalus, Mr. Horrebow. Paris, Mr. Duruset.
Montague, Mr. Evans. Capulet, Mr. Egerton.
Romeo, Mr. Abbott
(His first appearance at this theatre these five years).
Mercutio, Mr. C. Kemble
(His first appearance in this character).
Benvolio, Mr. Baker. Tybalt, Mr. Diddear.
Friar John, Mr. Mears.
Friar Laurence, Mr. Warde
(His first appearance in this character).
Apothecary, Mr. Meadows. Page, Miss Fortescue.
Balthazzar, Mr. Irwin.
Abram, Mr. Heath. Samson, Mr. Atkins.
Gregory, Mr. Norris. Peter, Mr. Keeley.

Juliet by Miss Kemble.
(Being her first appearance on any stage).
Lady Capulet (on this occasion) Mrs. C. Kemble.
Nurse, Mrs. Davenport.
In Act I. a Masquerade, "Feud Dane,"
Incidental to the piece.
In Act V. the Funeral Procession of Juliet and a
Solemn Dirge.
The Vocal Parts by Messrs. Ashton, Birt, Caulfield, Crumpton,
Fuller, Goadson, Miller, May, Mears, Norris,
Purday, Shegog, G. Stainbury, C. and S. Tett, Wood, &c., &c.

"My poor mother went to her dressing-room to get herself ready, and did not return to me for fear of increasing my agitation by her own. My dear aunt and my maid and a theatre-dresser performed my toilet for me, and at length I was placed on a chair, with my satin train carefully laid over the back of it; and there I sat, ready for execution, with the palms of my hands pressed convulsively together, and the tears I in vain endeavoured to repress welling up into my eyes and brimming slowly down over my rouged cheeks, upon which my aunt, with a smile full of pity renewed the colour. Once and again my father came to the door, and I heard his anxious 'How is she?' to which my aunt answered, sending him away with words of comforting cheer.

"At last, 'MISS KEMBLE CALLED FOR THE STAGE, MA'AM!' accompanied by a brisk tap at the door, started me straight on my feet, and I was led round the side scene opposite to the one on which I saw my mother advance on the stage; and while the uproar of her reception filled me with terror, dear old Mrs. Davenport (the Nurse), and dear Mr. Keeley (the Peter), and half the *dramatis personæ* of the play (but not my father, who had retreated, quite unable to endure the scene) stood around me as I lay, all but insensible, in my aunt's arms.

"'Courage, courage, dear child!'

"'Poor thing!' reiterated Mrs. Davenport.

"'Never mind 'em, Miss Kemble,' urged Keeley, in that irresistible, comical, nervous, lachrymose voice of his, which I have never since heard without a thought of, 'Don't think of 'em any more than if they were rows of cabbages.'

"'Nurse,' called my mother, and in waddled Mrs. Davenport, who, turning back, called in her turn, 'Juliet.'

"My aunt gave me an impulse forward, and I ran straight across the stage, stunned with the tremendous shout that greeted me, my eyes covered with mist, and the green baize flooring of the stage feeling as if it rose up against my feet; but I got hold of my mother, and stood like a terrified creature at bay, confronting the huge theatre full of gazing human beings. I do not think a word I uttered during this scene could have been audible. In the next, the Ball-room, I began to forget myself; in the following one, the Balcony Scene, I had done so, and, for aught I know, I was Juliet. After this I did not return into myself until all was over, and, amid a tumultuous storm of applause, congratulation, tears, embraces, and a general joyous explosion of unutterable relief at the fortunate termination of my attempt, we went home."

The analysis of emotions in this interesting picture is given with an exquisite delicacy and nature, to say nothing of its literary grace. We follow the while and share in the general nervousness. She sat down to supper that night with her "poor, rejoicing parents," whom she saved from ruin, still better pleased, she adds, with a lovely little Geneva watch, all enriched with jewels, which her father laid by her plate, and which she laid that night under her happy pillow.

The success of the experiment was signal. The young, bright girl attracted all hearts. She played the character a hundred and twenty times, an amazing, indeed, an unprecedented, "run" in those days. "From an insignificant school girl I suddenly became an object of public interest. I was a little lion in society, and the town talk of the day. Approbation, adulation, admiration were showered on me." Her picture, by Lawrence, was in the shop windows; plates and saucers showed her delicate figure as Juliet; while pocket-handkerchiefs even were sold dotted all over with minature likenesses. And she went down, she tells us, the first week to draw her salary, fixed at 30 guineas a week—a small fortune.

An Operatic Retrospect.

By Charles Hervey.

Do not for a moment imagine, indulgent reader of The Theatre, that the heading of the present paper betokens any intention on my part to go over old ground, and on the fallacious plea of "bis repetita placent" to inflict on you supplementary reminiscences of artistic celebrities connected with the Académie Royale de Musique. This time we have little or nothing to do with the actors, but with the audience assembled to hear and admire them, at a period when Louis Philippe still ruled—with a shaky hand, it is true—over the destinies of France, or, in other words, in the year of grace 1845. I have more reasons than one for selecting this particular epoch; first, because I have not only my own recollections, but also those of contemporary chroniclers to draw upon; and secondly, because it affords me an opportunity of grouping together a variety of notable personages, few of whom are now living, and of thereby giving an idea of Parisian society as it existed during the reign of the Citizen King.

Let me therefore briefly recall to your memory that at the date in question M. Léon Pillet held the reins of government in the Rue de Peletier, and in spite of the musical critics who, with scarcely an exception, systematically proclaimed his incompetency week after week, took matters very coolly, and philosophically declined to abdicate; that opera was represented by Duprez, Barroilhet, Massol, Mesdames Stoltz, Dorus Gras, and Nau, and ballet by Carlotta Grisi, Maria, and the sisters Dumilatre; and that Habeneck, wickedly styled, "bourru, mais peu bienfaisant," conducted the orchestra; and this done, all that is needful will have been said respecting the little world behind the curtain.

We will now suppose ourselves comfortably reclining in an excellent stall, from which coign of vantage we enjoy a view of the entire *salle*, at the present moment—four stage boxes excepted—

filled to overflowing. The vacant apartments alluded to are those formerly tenanted by the Duke of Orleans, M. de Claparède, and the two millionaires, the banker Aguado and Baron Schickler, all recently dead, and, according to a singular hypothesis broached by M. Albéric Second, owing to an involuntary gesture of the baritone Massol. In the third act of Halévy's "Reine de Chypre," the following not over brilliant lines:—

"Ce Crésus qu'on remarque,
Tient-il
Plus que nous de la Parque
Le fil?"

fell to the share of this clever artist, who naturally accompanied his singing by pointing to an imaginary Crœsus with his right or left hand, as the fancy took him. It seems that during the early performances of the piece he chanced to use the latter, extending it exactly on a level with the box occupied by M. Aguado, who in a very few days was the first victim of the unconscious "jettatore." Some weeks later, the right hand having been brought into play, the Duke of Orleans was also numbered with the dead; and, before the run of the opera had come to a close, Messieurs de Claparède and Schickler met with a similar fate. It was subsequently noticed that, whether from prudence or superstition matters little, Doctor Véron, formerly manager of this theatre, invariably quitted his box at the commencement of the third act; while M. Thiers, sagely guarding himself against any possible contingency, never entered the Opéra when "La Reine de Chypre" was in the bills. I am not aware if the report of his supposed "evil eye" ever reached Massol's ears, and give the story as it was current at the time, merely venturing to suggest that "se non è vero, è ben trovato."

To-night, however, there is no cause for apprehension, for the overture to "Guillaume Tell" has just concluded, and Duprez, the inimitable Arnold, is a sufficient attraction to ensure the presence of every admirer of the favourite tenor. Look round the house, and you will recognise in all directions, from the grand tier to the "baignoires," some well-known representatives of the various coteries of society. Legitimist and Orleanist, glancing superciliously at each other, and interspersed with the pick of the foreign residents and birds of passage temporarily sojourning in the gay city. The exclusive ladies of the Faubourg, the Princess

de Beaufremont, the Duchess de Valençay, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles are separated by a thin partition from the devoted partisans of the reigning dynasty, Madame de Liadières, Madame de Vatry, and Madame Thiers; the ambassadresses, the Princess de Ligne and Madame Pozzo di Borgo hold their respective courts in the spacious centre boxes; young Demidoff and his handsome wife, the Princess Mathilde, sit in solitary state adjoining the lively Madame de Pontalba; while the Russian contingent is represented by the Princesses Bagration and Radziwill, and the inevitable Tufiakine, a wry-necked old *roué*, familiarly spoken of as "Torticolis." Near him a constant buzz of conversation announces the presence of Madame Merlin, the friend and patroness of Malibran, and herself no mean adept in the art of song; and in a small box on the second tier are visible the long fair curls of Delphine de Girardin, doubtless mentally taking notes for her forthcoming contribution to "la Presse," under the transparent pseudomyn of the Vicomte de Launay.

Duprez has just sung his opening air, and as usual electrified the audience, with the exception of two occupants of the stalls, namely, M. Léon Halévy, who appreciates no music save that of his brother Fromenthal, and Meyerbeer's factotum and worshipper Gouin, for whom the melodies of Rossini are "trifles light as air" compared to the sepulchral effects of "Robert le Diable." Both of these malcontents smile pityingly at the general enthusiasm, and yawn profoundly. Théophile Gautier, on the contrary, who is leaning against a pillar at the entrance of the amphitheatre, applauds with meridional fervour; his stay, however, will not be long, for he is meditating the scenario of a new ballet, and we may safely wager that its heroine will be Mdlle. Carlotta Grisi. Those literary Siamese twins, M. Alphonse Royer and M. Gustave Vaez, the authors of "La Favorite," are conversing together in whispers, probably airing their pet grievance, and deploring the non-production of their French version of "L'Italiana in Algeri," while their neighbour, a shrewd and benevolent-looking personage, appears to be absorbed in deep reflection, heeding little what passes round him. This is Merle, of the "Quotidienne," the husband of Madame Dorval, and a perfect Protean of journalism, signing his theatrical notices "J. T.," his weekly review "Le Causeur," his art criticisms "L'Amateur," and contributing innumerable chatty articles to *La Mode* without any signature at all.

The tall, cadaverous man immediately behind him is a noted literary character, whose fertile brain is perpetually inventing the most intricate plots, teeming with thrilling adventures and hair-breadth escapes; in a word, M. Léo Lespès, who will one day style himself "Timothée Trimm," and make the fortune of the *Petit Journal* with his interminable "Rocambole." He is described by a fantastic contemporary as having "the nose of Hoffmann, the smile of Paganini, the eye of Anne Radcliffe, the mouth of Cagliostro, the chin of the Count St. Germain, and the hair of the wandering Jew."

"Why is he always called 'Commander?'" I asked one of his colleagues the first time I beheld this singular individual.

"Because he was once sergeant in a regiment of the line," was the ambiguous reply.

Flitting about in butterfly fashion from stall to amphitheatre, and back again to stall, is the remarkably good-looking Roger de Beauvoir, author of the "Chevalier de St. Georges," who is not yet the husband of pretty Aimée Doze, of the Français, but who very soon will be. He is talking to Victor Hugo's brother-in-law, Paul Foucher, the ugliest man of letters in France or out of it; they are joined by M. Anténor Joly, the founder of countless literary speculations all more or less unsuccessful, and afflicted with incurable deafness. Nodding graciously to the group from the grand tier, we notice a very showy and splendidly-attired dame, no other than Madame Véry, of Palais Royal celebrity, with a bouquet of gigantic dimensions entirely covering the front of her box. Between her husband's establishment and that of an almost equally well-known rival *restaurateur* rages a bitter animosity; and she has assuredly not yet forgotten the mortification experienced by her a few months ago, when, on entering the *salon* of a lady friend, notorious for her love of tittle-tattle and mischief-making, she heard herself announced—whether by accident or design never transpired—as "Madame Véfour!"

One of to-night's audience, invariably at his post whenever "Guillaume Tell" is in the bills, is the "Hermit of the Chausée d'Antin," M. de Jouy, the successor of Parny at the Academy, and joint author with M. Hippolyte Bis of the libretto of Rossini's master-piece. Not that he cares an iota for the music, or troubles himself, as does M. Castil-Blaze, whether the orchestration be absolutely faultless or not; on the contrary, he regards them

merely as a pleasing accompaniment to his recitatives, of which he is inordinately vain, as an anecdote current at the time will show. After the first performance of the opera in 1829, the members of the orchestra assembled under the composer's windows, and played the overture by way of a serenade, to the delight of a throng of people attracted thither by the unusual spectacle. When they had finished, the surrounding crowd insisted on its repetition, and loud cries of "Bis! bis!" rent the air. M. de Jouy, who had been in conference with the maestro respecting some slight modifications in the libretto, listened with rapture to the popular enthusiasm; and, stepping out on the balcony, made a sign that he wished to speak. Silence having been at length obtained, he treated those present to the following harangue, which probably not a little astonished them. "My good friends," he began, in a voice trembling with emotion, "M. Hippolyte Bis, whom you so eagerly desire to see, and who, I am convinced, would be greatly flattered by your approval, is not in Paris, and cannot, therefore, personally respond to your invitation. I am M. de Jouy, his collaborator, and in his name and my own I beg to thank you for this spontaneous expression of homage, which we shall ever regard as the most precious and gratifying incident in our literary career."

The curtain has fallen on the act preceding the ballet, and the privileged frequenters of the *coulisses*, Jockey club exquisites, *attachés d'ambassade* and munificent patrons of the choregraphic art are hurrying through the little door conducting to the sanctuary of Terpsichore, where the prettiest "coryphées," Mdlles. Olympe St. Georges, Héloïse Florentin, and Palmyre Petit at their head, are putting the finishing touch to their toilette; while the merry sisterhood of "rats" are pirouetting and chattering amid a Babel of tongues, giving an idea of Pandemonium broken loose. Let us meanwhile adjourn to the public *foyer*, where we are certain to find ourselves in good company. See, there is Janin, surrounded by his satellites, and exchanging lively *repartees* with Balzac, the latter, as usual, leaning on his gold-headed cane; Alexandre Dumas is relating to Auber his interview with Porcher, the *chef de claque* of the Porte St. Martin, who had asked him as a special favour to address him in future by the familiar "tu."

"Which you could hardly refuse," said the composer of "La Muette."

"Of course not," replied Dumas, laughing heartily. "Porcher, mon ami," I said, "prête-moi cinquante louis."

"And did he?"

"*Parbleu!*"

The principal figure in yonder group, a tallish, slightly built personage, wearing the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, is Gaetano Donizetti, whose facility of composition is proverbial, and who never, perhaps, gave a more astonishing proof of it than in writing the magnificent fourth act of "La Favorite" in a single night; of all musicians he is the most ubiquitous, now here, now at Rome, Florence, Venice, or Turin--wherever a theatre and an operatic company are to be found, he is sure to turn up sooner or later with a new work ready for production. Almost equally prolific, but of far inferior merit, is Adolphe Adam, peering about through his spectacles in search of his ordinary librettists Barbier and Michel Carré; and behind him, seated in melancholy solitude on a corner bench, is the hitherto unappreciated composer of "La Reine Mab," Hector Berlioz, the tardy recognition of whose genius he, alas! will not live to see. Sauntering to and fro with ambling step, his black wig bobbing up and down, and his hands encased in imperfectly cleaned white gloves, the Vicomte d'Arlincourt sidles along towards Balzac and Janin, who return his effusive greeting with a slight inclination of the head, and continue their conversation as if unconscious of his presence. Not in the least daunted by this frigid reception, the author of "Le Solitaire" turns gracefully on his heel, and accosts the moody Berlioz, who, evidently bored by the *rencontre*, rises from his bench, and beats a hasty retreat; a prudent policy which, as the irrepressible Vicomte is coming our way, we had better imitate, and re-enter the *salle*.

By this time the ballet is in full swing, and M. Achille Vigier, the proprietor of the floating baths on the Seine bearing his name, is leaning forward in his box, and critically surveying through a gigantic opera-glass the seductive evolutions of the *danseuses*, many of whom every now and then bestow a glance of recognition on some favoured admirer. At the entrance to the stalls stand a group of regular *habitués*. M. Lautour-Mézeray, with the inevitable camellia in his button-hole; the once incorrigible *farceur* Romieu, now grave and sedate as befits the Prefêt de la Dordogne; M. Perpignan, whose sole mission on earth appears to be the suppression of the

cancan; and lastly, the grey-haired Colonel Montaigu, formerly aide-de-camp to Napoleon, and the hero of a good story which is worth recording here.

In one of the innumerable military spectacles produced at the Cirque-Olympique, the name of the gentleman in question, at the period alluded to a subordinate member of the Imperial staff, figured in the cast; his representative being an ungainly and shabbily attired "super," engaged for the run of the piece at eighteen sous a night, who only appeared in one scene, and had absolutely nothing to do beyond listening respectfully, while the Emperor—invariably personated by Edmond, whose conception of the character was more remarkable for abruptness of manner than for elegance of diction—addressed him as follows :—

"M'sieu Montaigu, portez-moi c'tte lettre !"

Naturally enough, the real Montaigu, who had witnessed the first performance of the drama, was furious, and in an interview with the manager next day, peremptorily insisted that some other name should be substituted for his own; and, this having been agreed to, flattered himself that in all probability the incident had escaped notice, and been entirely forgotten. Two years later, during an *entr'acte* at the Opera, he and M. Perpignan already mentioned happened to differ on some topic of the day; and both being clever talkers the discussion was highly relished by their neighbours in the stalls. At length, after an apparently unanswerable rejoinder, the Colonel triumphantly suggested to his adversary that he might as well own himself vanquished, for he hadn't a leg to stand on.

"Havn't I ?" maliciously retorted Perpignan; and, rising suddenly from his seat, and imitating exactly the voice and attitude of the actor Edmond, he hissed out, with terrible distinctness :—

"M'sieu Montaigu, portez-moi c'tte lettre !"

The unfortunate Colonel, pale with rage and mortification, made one bound from his stall to the door, and many months elapsed before he ventured to reappear at the opera.

While we have been indulging in this reminiscence, time has slipped away, and the last act is drawing to a close. The house is thinning fast; Eugéne Scribe and his wife have already disap-

peared from their box on the third tier, and the solemn-visaged academician Viennet, his scanty hair brushed up into a peak on the top of his head, is politely—for he is a model of courtesy—demanding his overcoat from the *ouvreuse* of the amphitheatre. We linger a few moments at the foot of the staircase, and are just in time to behold Mr. and Mrs. Thorn, the original founders of the American colony in Paris, stepping into their luxuriously appointed equipage; whilst, gliding one after the other through a side door, the lustrous-eyed "dame aux camélias" Marie Duplessis and her future representative, Madame Doche, are spirited away in their respective broughams. The two natives of Marseilles, Léon Gozlan and Amédée Achard, walk off arm-in-arm, the former, as is his wont, a picture of extreme depression, and the latter gesticulating and chattering with ultra-southern vivacity; Alphonse Karr, taking forcible possession of the reluctant Eugine Guinot, persists in dilating on the qualities of his favourite Newfoundland Freischütz; while the Vicomte d'Arlincourt, his hands imbedded in the pockets of a nondescript garment supposed to represent a paletot, bends his steps towards the Boulevard, possibly meditating on the cost of his evening's entertainment, and doubting—for he is a thrifty man—whether it would not have been better to have kept his money.

Traversing the sparely lit Passage de l'Opéra, we pause an instant within view of the stage door, and catch a flying glimpse of Mdlle. Olympe St. Georges issuing from thence, and bearing a choice bouquet left for her in the charge of the portress, Mdme. Crosnier. A moment later poor little Sidonie Toussaint, to whose share no such tributes of homage have hitherto fallen, appears empty handed, and trudges gaily along to her sixth-floor attic, consoling herself for her lack of admirers by repeating the lines attributed to her equally unappreciated colleague, Mdlle. Laure Lechêne:—

> "Le fiacre me déplaît, l'omnibus me fait mal;
> Ce qu'il me faut c'est un briska—plus, un cheval!"

Samuel Phelps.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By Richard Lee.

(Concluded.)

THE modest, earnest tone of this address, *simplex munditus* in its homely phraseology, gave a faithful forecast of the quality which throughout its prolonged existence characterised the management of Sadler's Wells. The tentative promises contained in the address, so conditionally dependent upon the goodwill of the public that they scarcely amount to pledges, were nevertheless, as the theatre steadily advanced in popular favour, redeemed *au pied de la lettre*. This fact is avouched by the ensuing record of Sadler's Wells, whose fortunes from that time became so bound up with the artistic career of Phelps that the story of one is mainly the the history of the other. On the 27th of May, 1844, came the first night of the new management, discovering the auditorium, as the green curtain rose upon the opening scene of "Macbeth," crowded from basement to roof. It was felt by the excited throng, of whom the present writer was one, whose hearty plaudits of welcome greeted the principal actors as they first appeared upon the scene, that, whether by accident or design, the right chord had been struck, and that the not less felt because unseen electric current of sympathy was set up for good, so to speak, between the occupants of the theatre on both sides of the footlights.

The first hearty salutations over, the audience, thoroughly typical of those which for a generation afterwards filled the house, was hushed by its attention to the action of the tragedy to such perfect stillness as quickened the sense to hear the faintest whisper from the stage, even when it fell to "a sound so fine that nothing came twixt it and silence." Should these lines be read, perchance, by any old playgoers present upon that memorable night, they will recall the spontaneous cheers which, as if by a common accord, gave an immediate personal interpretation to the hesitating

doubt expressed by Phelps as the faltering Thane of Cawdor, and rejected almost before it was uttered by the "undoubted mettle" of his partner :—

Macbeth : If we should fail ?
Lady Macbeth : We fail ?—
But screw your courage to the sticking place,
And we'll not fail.

Applications of the *argumentum ad hominem* upon the scene itself, from the character to the actor assuming it, are most assuredly apart from the purpose of playing ; but "nice customs curtsey to great kings," and a supreme occasion, such as that here instanced, involving the inauguration of a sterling legitimate theatre, excuses, if it does not absolutely justify, the passing kindly reference to the individual *propria personâ.*

It may be of interest to the reader here to note the cast of "Macbeth" in respect of the principal characters of the tragedy as presented on the opening night of Sadler's Wells as a legitimate theatre :—

Duncan, King of Scotland	Mr. Williams
Malcolm	Mr. Hield
Macbeth	Mr. Phelps
Macduff	Mr. H. Marston
Banquo	Mr. H. Lacy
Lady Macbeth	Mrs. Warner
Gentlewoman	Mrs. H. Marston

Mr. H. Lacy, the impersonator of Banquo, is the same who afterwards became the well known theatrical publisher in the Strand, the predecessor of Mr. Samuel French.

Another important personage in the tragedy, not included, however, in the foregoing list, the *apparition of a child* rising to address Macbeth with shrill infantile voice from the witches' cauldron, was enacted by a pretty wee morsel of femininity, then just old enough to lisp the words of warning, but afterwards rendered popular by many a graceful stage assumption—the late winsome and accomplished actress, Miss Patty Oliver.

The initial representation of "Macbeth" proving to be a success as complete as it was unexpected, melodrama was joyfully eliminated from the scheme of management at once and for ever, and henceforth the legitimate drama reigned in its stead. Directly "Othello" could be adequately rehearsed, its production followed upon that of the Celtic tragedy, with the Moor cast to Phelps, Iago to Mr. H. Marston, Cassio to Mr. Hudson (afterwards well

known as the humorous impersonator of Irish characters at the Haymarket), Roderigo to Mr. Jno. Webster (also later on a favourite actor at the same West-End theatre), Emilia to Mrs. Warner, and Desdemona to Miss Cooper, otherwise Mrs. H. Lacy, the accomplished wife of the actor already referred to. Together with these ladies and geetlemen, the Sadlers' Wells company as at first constituted included Miss Emma Harding—whom playgoers will remember as a light comedian at the old Adelphi, and also at the Princess's—the Misses Lebatt and Morelli, Messrs. Binge, Forman, Graham, Franks, and Knight. Within a few months of the opening, the dramatic troupe received valuable artistic reinforcement by the accession to its ranks of Miss Julia St. George, pleasantly recalled alike as singer and actress; Miss Fanny Raymond (the same who, as Mrs. Raymond, of the Strand Theatre, became the funniest and most mirth-moving "old woman" of her time); Mr. A. Younge, Mr. George Bennett, Mr. Hoskins, Mr. Scharf, Mr. W. Belford, and Mr. Villiers.

The leading actors of the company were too well practised in elocution and action to require, or it may be to accept, their leader's tuition; but of the rank and file it may be justly said that they owed everything to his tuition. For them no less than for their audiences the stage of Sadler's Wells was truly a School of Dramatic Art, of which Phelps was the accomplished master. At the rehearsals, invariably conducted by himself, his efforts were unceasing, not merely with the minor actors, but even with the mute supernumeraries. Tolerant of everything but inefficiency, not once only, but twenty times in succession, would he put those showing incompetency through their gestures or their words. If the histrionic power were in them, Phelps would draw it out; if it were not, he would drive it in. Surely no stage manager ever laboured with more steadfast zeal to make the very best of his material. And he found his reward in the recognition by the public of the perfect artistic confederacy of his company, disciplined, like Milton's angels, "from shadowy types to truth." The unity of purpose thus attained being complete, individual merits, however high, became, as they should in any picture, whether on the stage or canvas, merged in the general effect. As a consequence, the symmetrical balance and sense of artistic proportion were so well kept, that on quitting the theatre the spectator, without exactly knowing wherefore, found himself invariably

calling to mind the play as a whole, and not any particular scene or person in it.

Working from the outset upon the sound principle, advantageous alike to actors and audience, of a constant change of performance—a plan now unfortunately quite gone out of fashion in English theatres—the Sadler's Wells company, after the production of "Macbeth" and "Othello," represented in succession, according to the order in which they are here set down, the following pieces, in each of which Phelps sustained the leading male character:—"The Stranger," "Jealous Wife," "Werner," "Merchant of Venice," "Virginius," "Rivals," "Hamlet," "Provoked Husband," "School for Scandal," "Wife," "Bridal," "New Way to Pay Old Debts," "Road to Ruin," "King Lear," "Wonder," "Lady of Lyons," "City Madam," and "Richard III." This succession carried the company on from the opening night, towards the end of May 1844, without intermission right up to Christmas; when, true to the traditions of the theatre in connection with the former triumphs of Grimaldi, Greenwood produced his pantomime. In conjunction with the entertainment of the great English carnival, "The Iron Chest" was given, followed later on by "Henry VIII," and "Wild Oats." With this revival of O'Keefe's comedy the first season of the legitimate drama at Sadler's Wells, carried through with unabated success, came to an end. The theatre closed for the summer vacation at Easter 1845, after remaining open nearly a year; when Phelps on the occasion of his benefit signalised the event by appearing in the character of Nicholas Flam in the farce of that name.

At the outset of the second season in the early autumn months of the same year "Henry VIII" was resumed, speedily followed by "The Fatal Dowry" of Massinger, and "Richelieu," with Sheridan Knowles' plays "William Tell," and "Love." These duly given, Phelps and his partners, incited at this time by the Press to produce original pieces, brought out a new play entitled "The King's Friend," written by Sullivan; the same dramatist it will be remembered who afterwards furnished an excellent comedy to the Haymarket called "A Beggar on Horseback." His Sadler's Wells venture, however, proved a failure, and nothing daunted, the management tried a second new play, written by Searle, called the "Priest's Daughter." This proving as unsuccessful as its immediate predecessor, the indomitable partners placed a third dramatic

novelty upon their stage, under the name of "The Florentines," which, like those foregoing it, failing to attract audiences, speedily followed them into the limbo of dead and forgotten dramas. With the dogged tenacity of Englishmen not knowing when they are beaten, or at any rate refusing to acknowledge defeat by resolving to retrieve success through the medium of original plays, the trio of managers actually put yet another new drama into rehearsal. History repeats itsef upon the mimic stage as well as in "this wide and universal theatre" of the world. The self-same accident which on the threshold of their enterprise impelled the Sadler's Wells partners to forego melodrama and take refuge in legitimate productions now turned them back from new plays to old ones. Thrown figuratively speaking upon their haunches by the immediate collapse of the third original piece, and the fourth not being ready, Phelps and his friends, merely as a stop gap, announced and brought out the "Gamester." As if by the touch of Prospero's magic wand the entire aspect of the Sadler's Wells, anditorium was instantly changed. Instead ofthe miserable array of empty benches, which in face of new pieces the theatre of late had presented, with a treasury to match, before the doors were opened for the first performance of the "Gamester" enough people had patiently besieged them to occupy every place in the house. The old play which gives Othello and Iago over again in prose, with a vivid exemplification in its catastrophe of the dire effects consequent upon indulgence in the desperate vice of gambling, continued so attractive that, like melodrama at the outset, M.S. pieces were now set aside, for a lengthened period, and as heretofore the fortunes of Sadler's Wells were again trusted to revivals; the principal of which were "Venice Preserved," "Macbeth," "King Lear," and "Pizarro," Phelps playing Rolla.

At the termination of the second season, Mrs. Warner seceded from the management; not through any disagreement with her co-partners, but purely for the purpose of repeating on her own account at the Marylebone Theatre the experiment which had been crowned with such signal favour and success at Sadler's Wells. The foremost actress of her time as this lady undoubtedly was as representative of the matronly heroines of tragedy, her withdrawal from the triune managerial confederacy at Islington was felt by both Phelps and his remaining partner to be nothing less than the abstraction of a supporting pillar from their dramatic

temple; for dowered by nature with rare classic beauty and grace of person in addition to her unrivalled histrionic gifts, Mrs. Warner had become a favourite element of attraction at Sadler's Wells. To supply her place was impossible, for she was unrivalled in quality; as compensation for her loss, it was therefore deemed advisable to strengthen the company in other ways. To this end overtures were made first to Vandenhoff and then to James Wallack. The artistic conditions upon which an engagement was offered to each of these actors in succession bear eloquent testimony to the fact that Phelps was more than ordinarily free from the professional jealousy proverbially afflicting players as a class. A list was drawn out of popular plays severally containing two characters of equal prominence, including amongst others "Julius Cæsar," "Othello," "Venice Preserved," and the first part of "Henry IV." This list was forwarded to both Vandenhoff and James Wallack with the option, offered first to one and then to the other of the part in each piece he would elect to play, Phelps undertaking to sustain the alternative character. The negotiation in each case after essentials had been fully agreed upon broke down at the last moment, upon some petty question of personal precedence. James Wallack cried off because his name, already printed in the same sized letters as Phelps the actor's in the body of the programme, was in lesser type than that of Phelps the manager at the head of the bill; and Vandenhoff withdrew upon the showing of an equally trivial conceit. Failing these veterans, Mr. William Creswick, then a rising young actor, was engaged, at the same time that a youthful actress was secured for the theatre who, though crude, immature, and untrained, possessed with the physical attributes of an exquisitely sympathetic voice and singular personal beauty the *feu sacrè* of histrionic genius in a more exalted degree than any other lady who since her day has made a *debut* upon the English stage. This actress was Miss Laura Addison, in speaking of whom to the present writer but a few brief months before he passed away Phelps in a generous rhapsody of praise declared that "she had the sweetest voice God ever gave to woman."

Early in the third season of Sadler's Wells, Miss Laura Addison made her first appearance upon the London Stage as Lady Mabel Lynterne, in Dr. Westland Maston's noble play the "Patrician's

Daughter," Phelps enacting the rôle of the parvenu hero. The native grace, maiden freshness, and above all the high wrought passion and emotion displayed by the young actress thrilling the audience with a keen delight, at once took the town by storm. Night after night artists, musical, literary, pictorial, and plastic, thronged to the outlying suburban theatre, while the Press through all the metropolitan journals, from the highest to the lowest poured forth column upon column of encomiastic criticism enthusiastically defining the merits of the *debutante*. This anthem of praise was renewed after each successive character assumed by Miss Addison, as Pauline in the "Lady of Lyons," and more especially as Juliet, to the Romeo of Mr. Creswick, Phelps appearing as Mercutio though only for one night.

Among the constant frequenters of Sadler's Wells theatre at this time and for long afterwards, drawn thither by the high intellectual level of the performances were Charles Dickens and his future biographer, Mr. John Forster. The great novelist and his satellite with their entourage having lately discovered an unsuspected poetical dramatist in the Rev. James White, the amiable rector of Bonchurch, Isle of Wight, urgently advised Phelps and his partner to bring out a piece written by their clerical friend. Influenced by the suasive opinion of such eminent literary authorities the managers ultimately accepted Mr. White's play "John Savile of Haysted," which after careful and prolonged rehearsal, was produced. It proved to be a more picturesque than powerful piece, turning upon the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham by Fenton. Mr. George Bennett, as the revengeful mono-maniac Fenton, made his mark, and so, too, did Miss Addison as the enthusiastic dreamy maiden Lilian Savile; but as John Savile, Phelps found no opportunity for the expression of his stage powers, having, as he discovered too late, literally nothing to do with the plot of the play. "John Savile of Haysted," although not a monetary success, brought sufficient prestige to Sadler's Wells to induce the management to bring out a second play by the same author, called "Feudal Times." Strangely enough in this drama as in the former, from the same mint, Phelps was mis-cast, the interest of the story centreing, as in the previous piece, in the characters personated by Miss Addison and Mr. George Bennett.

But notwithstanding the acknowledged merit of Mr. White's plays, they never helped to fill the treasury coffers; and it is a

moot question whether the pieces of any modern author, be their quality what it might, presented upon the same stage at that time, would have succeeded in bringing grist to the mill. The simple truth is, that the frequenters of Sadler's Wells theatre were quite exceptional, having salient features and characteristics peculiarly their own. More than any other they were an audience of students, who came to see presented upon the stage that which they had read and reflected on at home. In the boxes, the pit, and even in the gallery, numbers almost amounting to a majority of those present, were nightly to be seen checking the text as it fell from the actor's lips by reference to their open Shakspeare, with as much devotion, and perhaps more, than if they had been at church. The charm which drew them to the theatre was not their unfamiliarity, but, on the contrary, their perfect intimacy with the plays they went to see; novelty in their sense meaning new readings, not new plots. It will be readily understood then that this class of playgoers would take no more interest in modern plays than a black-letter bookworm would in modern novels.

It was not until after the cession of Mrs. Warner in the third year of their management that Phelps and Greenwood began to exercise that archæological correctness in respect of scenery and costume which afterwards became so noteworthy a feature of their revivals. To recapitulate these, in the order of production season after season as a *catalogue raisonne*, would be only tedious to the reader. Let it suffice that from first to last Phelps and his fellow-managers presented within "this wooden O" of Sadler's Wells stage thirty-one of the thirty-four plays of Shakspeare, the exceptions being the trilogy of "Henry VI.," "Troilus and Cressida," and "Richard II." The last of these was actually in rehearsal when Phelps, hearing that Charles Kean was about to bring out the same play at the Princess's, rather than provoke a comparison retired the piece, leaving the field open to his brother actor and manager, undisputed. Such conduct was the more magnanimous in view of the circumstance that, so far as outward evidences went, it was a fair presumption that Charles Kean had followed in the artistic wake of the Sadler's Wells management; for it was not until after the success of the Islington theatre as a Shakspearean play-house had been established, and Kean by repeated visits had witnessed the fact that he gave up acting comedy and melodrama at the Princess's, and there produced the series of

splendid Shakspearean pageants by which he ultimately so signally distinguished himself and his management.

Phelps and Charles Kean never acted together but in one piece; at the Haymarket years before they became managers, in a now forgotten play by Sheridan Knowles, called "The Rose of Arragon." Although Kean as the favoured lover Alonso appealed to the sympathy of the audience, and Phelps as the villainous rival Almagro, excited popular antipathy, the former found it convenient to retire from the cast after a very few representations. Rivals on the stage, they were fated to be so off it. On the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Royal of England to the Crown Prince of Prussia, a grand state Shakspearean performance by command of Her Majesty was given at the Haymarket Opera House in presence of the British Court, and the brilliant array of foreign sovereigns and princes constituting the nuptial guests. The conduct of the entertainment was entrusted to Mr. Mitchell, of the Bond-street Library, which so offended the pride of Charles Kean that he declined to play. Mitchell thereupon applied to Phelps who accordingly, in honour of the august occasion, got up "Macbeth," mainly cast in his own company. So gratified were the Queen and Prince Albert with the magnificent result that the ordering of the annual dramatic performances at Windsor Castle heretofore entrusted exclusively to Charles Kean was thereafter given alternately to Phelps and himself. A further recognition of the Royal satisfaction was incidentally accorded to Phelps in the professional visit soon afterwards made by the Sadler's Wells company to Berlin, prompted it was said by the expressed wish of the amiable Crown Princess of Prussia to renew the pleasure received by herself and her husband from the memorable state performance given in celebration of their marriage.

Success is its own herald. Such implicit confidence did the artistic organisation of the Sadler's Wells management inspire in the minds of theatrical proprietors that Phelps and Greenwood were more than once invited by the Executive Committee of Drury Lane to re-open that theatre. A similar request was also repeatedly preferred to them with reference to the Lyceum by its owner, Mr. Arnold. But as visitors from the West End now flocked to Sadler's Wells its prudent managers saw no reason why they should speculatively travel elsewhere to seek what they had already found, an audience.

The world-wide triumph of the Great Exhibition of 1851, temporarily eclipsed all memories of the strenuous individual efforts previously made to secure its success. Among these disinterested endeavours that of Phelps and Greenwood is worthy of special record. Throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom they were the only managers at whose theatre a benefit was given in aid of the Exhibition. This event took place just twelve months before the opening day, in May 1850, when "Henry VIII." was represented, with Phelps as Cardinal Wolsley, Miss Glyn as Queen Katharine, and Mr. G. Bennett as the King. The high esteem in which Sadler's Wells theatre had then come to be held by the social and intellectual leaders of English Society, the best blood and the best brains of the country, is eloquently attested by the list of famous personages who promoted the benefit.

President.

H.R.H. The Duke of Cambridge.

Committee.

Charles Dickens	Lord Nugent
Leigh Hunt	Lord Dudley C. Stuart, M.P.
Charles Kemble	R. Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton).
Douglas Jerrold	W. M. Thackeray
John Forster	John Oxenford
Charles Knight	Daniel Maclise, R.A.
Sheridan Knowles	H. F. Chorley
R. H. Horne	J. H. Heraud
J. Westland Marston	F. G. Tomlins
T. K. Hervey	George Daniel
C. Cowden Clarke	Clarkson Stanfield, R.A.

This meed of homage of aristos, the best in every sense, to the histrionic excellence akin to itself which, despite every disadvantage of locality and antecedent, had placed Sadler's Wells in the forefront of English theatres as the acknowledged typical temple of dramatic art, is probably the highest credential of quality ever accorded to an actor and a management. And when it is considered that so exalted a recognition alike of artistic eminence and intellectual equality was earned in what has been cynically called a "Provincial" playhouse having but a sixpenny gallery, a shilling pit, and two-shilling boxes, the slight material means by which

so sterling an end was attained renders the achievement the more admirable. But it must not be imagined that so much could be done with so little without the rigid and vigilant exercise o economy, as well as of taste and judgment based upon practical experience. Happily for the Sadler's Wells administration Phelps had in his fellow partner Greenwood a man possessing every quality essential to the successful management of a theatre; such a one as Horace defines in the *Ars Poetica. Quid deceat, quid non; quo virtus quo ferat error.* With what cordial confidence in their common intelligence, the two Sadler's Wells managers worked together is shown by the following letter, addressed by one to the other during the recess between the seasons of the theatre:—

"Dublin, May 30th.

"Dear Greenwood,—I have had a long letter from Mr. Forster enclosing one from Sir Edward Lytton. Political reasons forbid his adventuring anything new on the stage at present, so we must shift our ground. I hope to be at home for a day or two about the 11th of June. Think of something in the meantime.

"I have been tormented out of my life with letters about 'Jack Shepherd' and other pleasantries connected with the 'Royal Property." * No less than three unknown friends sent me an extract from "Lloyd's Paper," on the subject. I am afraid I have "lost my reputation," and that we had better abandon the legitimate for the crowbar.

"Faithfully yours,

"S. Phelps."

The concluding paragraph of this letter contains a touch of the ironic humour so eminently characteristic of the writer. *Plus aloës quam mellis habet,* it is true; but only in bitter derision for those who roused his anger by degrading his art. Otherwise Phelps developed a natural vein of kindly though pungent pleasantry which, running through his conversation, pointed the remarks that made his company so attractive to his few but cherished intimates.

The allusion at the opening of the letter is evidently to an application made to Sir Bulwer Lytton to write a new play for Sadler's Wells, and declined, as stated, for the reason that the famous author was at that time in office as Colonial Minister under the administration of the late Lord Derby. The letter is valuable as showing that liberality quite consisted with economy in the management of Sadler's Wells theatre; it being well known

* Meaning, Sadler's Wells, where "Jack Shepherd" had been produced by the managers to whom the theatre had been let for the off-season.

that the dramatist of "Richelieu," and the "Lady of Lyons," required many hundreds of pounds for an original play from his hand, to be paid moreover in hard cash prior to the production of the piece.

A circumstance connected with the revival of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," will, however, serve to illustrate the generosity of the Sadler's Wells management towards those who, unlike Sir Bulwer Lytton, were not in a position to name and claim their own terms. New scenery being required for Massinger's play a scene plot was drawn out by Mr. Greenwood and sent to a poor but clever young scenic artist, who, however, since that time has mastered fame and fortune in his craft, requesting him to state the lowest price for cash at which he would execute the specified work. The next morning early the artist called at the theatre, saw the two managers, and with hesitating diffidence which heightened rather than concealed his anxious desire to secure the commission, named his terms. After a brief consultation with Phelps, Greenwood, turning to the expectant artist, told him, in so many words:—"We cannot pay your price." "I am very sorry, but I assure you I couldn't do the work for less," was the reply. "No," answered Greenwood, and you couldn't do it for *that*, unless you scamper the work. We want it *well* done, and if you like to do it so, we'll give you £30 more than you ask." It scarcely needs to be said that the commission was gratefully accepted. And those who recall the beautiful scenery at Sadler's Wells illustrating "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," most particularly an English landscape over which the glow of a Danby-like sunset gradually gloamed into the semi-darkness of a summer night, will bear witness to the fact that in acknowledgment of the frank liberality the managers had extended to him the painter nobly expressed his gratitude through his work.

Of the plays from the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists, excluding Shakspeare, revived at Sadler's Wells the most successful was the "Duchess of Malfi," due mainly to the highly wrought impersonation of the Duchess by Miss Glyn, the favourite pupil of Charles Kemble, an artist who owed her introduction to a metropolitan audience to the management of the Islington theatre. *Apropos* of the production of "The Duchess of Malfi," the punctilious conscientiousness of Phelps is gratefully

attested by Mr. R. H. Horne who had brought his ripe powers as a scholarly dramatist to bear in the necessary reconstruction of John Webster's tragedy for the stage. Fully approving the altered version, Phelps said to him: "Mr. Horne, the greatest possible success here would by no means be of such value to you as a dramatist as if this tragedy were brought out at Drury Lane; Mr. —— has now got Drury Lane, and it is only right that I should say you had better make him the first offer. If he does not produce it, I will." Presented, and rejected at Old Drury as impracticable, a piece as to which "nothing could be done with it, or for it," "The Duchess of Malfi" was brought back to Phelps, who true to his word, produced the tragedy and thereby stultified the oracularly pronounced verdict of the Drury Lane manager.

The tinge of mutual jealousy which slightly asperated the early histrionic association of Macready and Phelps softened into a generous rivalry as time wore on and each artist learned to appreciate and respect the merit of the other. In the farewell speech of Macready, on the occasion of his retirement from the stage in 1851, the veteran actor generously referred to the management of Sadler's Wells in these words, "Others will take up this uncompleted work of mine; and if inquiry were set on foot for one best qualified to undertake the task, I should seek him in the theatre which by eight years' labour he has from the most degraded condition raised high in public estimation, not only as regards the intelligence and respectability of his audiences, but by the learned and tasteful spirit of his productions."

How bounteously generous Phelps could be even towards the only competitor whose rivalry he had cause to fear, the following memorandum standing on Macready's diary serves to show:—"Forster called, he told me of the offer of Mr. Phelps, thinking my night was postponed for want of a company, to close his theatre and place his company at my disposal. It does him great honour."

But magnanimity such as this, masked behind a shy, reserved, and almost brusque manner to strangers, was not the less frequently exercised because never publicly exploited: in so sensitive a nature lurked no strain of the charlatan, who systematically advertises his charity as a means to enhance his popularity. The present writer had it from the lips of a friend of Phelps that on a crucial occasion when it was submitted that he who told the story

lacked the means to start in his profession, the old actor said to him: "If you want money, come to me and have it." The offer involved several hundred pounds, and there was no obligation to make it save disinterested friendship. Many a needy curate and aspiring actor lives to bear witness to the advantages he sought and found from the elocutionary teaching of Phelps, but not one can truly say that the fee tendered by him was ever accepted.

Pronounced to be the best manager on the stage, Phelps was the worst manager off it, for at all times he was too enthusiastically engrossed by his art to be a good man of business. Shrewd evidence of this was given towards the close of the Sadler's Wells régime. So long as the vigilant eye of his partner supervised the direction the theatre proved remunerative to both. But when after an association of sixteen years in the spring of 1860, Greenwood finally seceded, the profits rapidly dwindled and sank into losses, although the receipts proved as good, if not better, than they had ever previously been. The consequence was that at the end of his second season of unassisted management Phelps brought his long association with Sadlers Well's theatre to a close.

His subsequent career of almost uniform prosperity proves, as Mr. Irving in turn has so signally proved at the Lyceum, that, given a player equal to the character, an artist worthy of his art, capable of rising to the height of its great argument, the highest productions of the drama now as ever have an enduring attraction for the public.

A minute critical analysis of the histrionic quality of Phelps is obviously beyond the scope of this paper, which considerations of space necessarily limit to the narrative of his artistic endeavours without seeking to ascertain and formulate the methods by which he expressed them. Suffice it now to say that in the massive breadth and severity of its outline his acting may be best defined as sculpturesque rather than pictorial; and as a consequence, no actor since Macready left the stage needed to depend so little as did Phelps upon the adventitious aids of scenery and costume. His face, though without beauty, was very expressive; its features in their varied mobility following every phase of his thought and feeling. The sole physical advantage in his art Phelps owed to nature was a voice of singularly full diapason; articulate, resonant, and sympathetic. It was music, said, not sung. Denied the outward advantage of a dignified form and a graceful presence, Phelps,

though fully able to conceive, was scarcely qualified to embody the highest types of the heroic drama. Failing, therefore, physically to realise the ideal standard of Lear, Macbeth, Othello, and Hamlet, he remained without a compeer in the secondary and more homely characters of Shakespeare demanding manliness without majesty such as Macduff, Hubert, Cassius, Shylock, and Timon. Psychologically estimated, the depth of his pathos transcended the height of his passion; which, though vivid with intensity, fell short of the sublime. His emotion had force but not grandeur, it was the thunder without the lightning; the tornado on the earth, not the tempest in the sky; for lacking mystery, it enthralled the sense, but scarcely awed the soul. Unrivalled in the expression of irascible indignation or splenetic malignity, his most moving triumphs in tragedy outside of Shakespeare were made in the delineation on one hand, of rugged kindly old warriors stung to the quick by desperate wrong, such as Melantius in the "Bridal," and Romont in the "Fatal Dowry," and on the other of churlish misers, or desperate misanthropes like Luke in the "City Madam," or Triboulet in the "Fool's Revenge."

In comedy Phelps's perception of character was as keen as his grasp was comprehensive, while his native sense of humour, more full than fine, powerful rather than delicate, was protean in its plastic adaptation to any individuality except that of the unctuous reveller, or the fine gentleman of manners. Tested by the exacting standard of the ideal art, these, his attributes as a comedian, account for the perfection of his Justice Shallow, Malvolio, Bottom, Christopher Sly, Sir Anthony Absolute, Dr. Cantwell, and Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, every one of which masterly assumptions entirely satisfied criticism; whereas, his Mercutio, Lord Ogleby and Sir Peter Teasle, lacking the refinement of high breeding; and his Falstaff, wanting the lubrication of joviality alike in voice and humour, left much to be desired. It is a pity that Phelps never played Captain Bobadil, a character indigenously suited to his quaint dry humour. A wish often expressed by him was to impersonate the Fool in "King Lear." Had he done so there is little doubt that, for the first time, the character would have been truly portrayed, not as a half-daft youth as conventionally represented, but as a keen-witted wizen old man, who, like his royal master, has acquired his shrewd sad worldly wisdom by a

bitter experience. Lear addressing the Fool as "Boy" is a mere term of condescending endearment.

A histrionic style in his graver quality founded upon that of Macready stamped Phelps by virtue of incessant study illumined by high intelligence as a faultless elocutionist, and an actor only short of the greatest. As a tragedian invested with the highest traditional powers, the product of supreme talent he owed more to art than to nature; but as a comedian, instinct with original humour, the outcome of inherent genius, he owed more to nature than to art.

His portrait stands limned in eloquent words, as if by anticipation, in the "characters" of Sir Thomas Overbury under the fitting title, *an excellent actor.* "Whatsoever is commendable in the grave orator, is most exquisitely perfect in him. By his action he fortifies moral precepts with example; for what we see him personate, we think truly done before us. He adds grace to the poet's labours; for what in the poet is but phantasy, in the actor becomes reality. He entertains us in the best leisure of our life; and when he dies we cannot be persuaded any man can do his parts like him."

Samuel Phelps was married even before he went on to the stage, and found the happiest cause in his home for the domestic life he invariably led. A great walker, and a keen sportsman, he carried his gun to the covert and his rod to the trout-stream to the last. He died at his country quarters, Anson's Farm, near Epping, November 6th, 1878, aged 72.

The ruling passion was strong in him, even in death. The record here given would be incomplete without the statement that just prior to his fatal illness he had engaged himself to appear in an original comedy entitled "Cent per Cent," written especially for him by the author of this memoir.

Players of the Past.

By Austin Brereton.

V.—SAMUEL FOOTE.

(*Conclusion.*)

FOOTE was absent from London between 1749 and 1752, in which latter year he presented to Garrick a little comedy, called "Taste," for which the Drury Lane manager both wrote and spoke the prologue. But he did not re-appear on the stage until the autumn of the following year, when he acted, at Drury Lane, Sir Charles Buck, in "The Englishman in Paris," a comedy written by him for Macklin and his daughter, and played by them with singular success six months previously at Covent Garden. The prologue written for this piece by Garrick was encored nightly during the long run of the play. Here, also, Foote appeared in his "Tea," in his play of "The Knights," a really admirable comedy produced by Foote after the run of "The Auction" at the Haymarket; as Fondlewife and Sir Courtly Nice; and he added to his list of parts Ben, in Congreve's "Love for Love," and Captain Brazen, in Farquhar's "Recruiting Officer." During the following summer he went to the Haymarket, where he laughed at the quarrels of Mrs. Bellamy and Mrs. Woffington. In 1756, he engaged himself at Covent Garden from February to May, where he produced his "Englishman Returned from Paris," which made another great success. During this engagement he also acted Fondlewife, Captain Brazen, and Sir Penurious Trifle; Lady Pentweazel, in a little play of his own, of the same name; Sir Paul Pliant, in Congreve's "Double Dealer"; and he advertised himself for Polonius in "Hamlet," but before the night of performance withdrew from the part. Meanwhile, old Macklin had set up a tavern in Covent Garden, where he alternated a three shilling "ordinary" with a shilling lecture upon oratory. These lectures of Macklin's supplied good food for Foote's humour, and the satirist set up a counter lecture

at the Haymarket, where he ridiculed Macklin's absurdities. It is recorded that he made a hundred pounds a night by his counter-oratory, while poor Macklin had to shut up the Piazza coffee-house and figure as "waiter, coffeeman, and chapman," in "The London Gazette."

One of Foote's most intimate acquaintances was Arthur Murphy, the dramatist. Murphy's letters are full of anecdotes of Foote's sprightly nature and keen wit. Murphy, for instance, is at Bristol, in the lowest possible spirits, when a splendid equipage arrives at the hotel. Foote, splendidly attired, alights, and, "while I am writing this, he is grinning at me from a corner of the room; we have had Mr. Punch already, and his company has lifted my spirits, and that is what makes me go on at this rate." Again, they are together at a country house, and Murphy is sadly preparing himself for a journey to London in order to get ready for press a number of "The Gray's Inn Journal," when Foote says he need not go on that account, and, producing a French magazine, tells him that he will find in it one of the prettiest oriental tales imaginable, which he has only to translate and send to the printer. Murphy takes his companion's advice, and so gets promoted to the notice of Johnson, whose own tale it turns out had itself been translated into French from a number of "The Rambler." On another occasion Foote and Murphy are in the gallery of the House of Commons, when Pitt is putting forth all his oratorical power against Murray. "Shall we go home now?" asks Murphy before Pitt had concluded his speech. "No," replies Foote, "let us wait until he has made the little man vanish entirely."

In September, 1756, he began an engagement at Drury Lane, where, after playing several of his own characters and of Congreve's, he produced, on February 5, 1757, his little comedy of "The Author," rich in character and brilliant in wit. The play became greatly popular. Kitty Clive's Becky was a companion picture to Foote's Cadwaller, which, says Horace Walpole, had never been equalled in its kind. It ran the remainder of the season, but was suppressed on Foote's attempting to revive it, as the central figure was a palpable and ridiculous caricature of a well-known Welshman, of large fortune, by name Ap-Rice, with whom Foote was familiar.

Next came a journey to Dublin, and the real introduction, by

Foote, to the stage of Tate Wilkinson, son of a popular preacher, at the Savoy, and known to buyers of theatrical literature as the author of some scarce volumes of reminiscences. Ned Shuter had introduced young Wilkinson to Garrick. He imitated Foote so cleverly at the interview that Garrick promptly engaged him for Drury Lane at thirty shillings. But soon afterwards Wilkinson imitated Garrick to Foote with so much effect that the latter made him an offer to accompany to Dublin. Long years afterwards, when Wilkinson wrote his "Memoirs," he recalled the eager joy with which he waited on Foote at the Bedford, and how they set off for Dublin in a post-chaise, Foote's servant riding on horse-back; how they only travelled that night to Foote's cottage at Elstree, in Hertfordshire, though they travelled post the remainder of the journey to Holyhead; and how, finally, when they had embarked, there was a great storm, the cabin was crowded, and poor young Tate was very ill, yet "Mr. Foote was well, and walking most of the night from place to place." In Dublin, though Foote played Bayes, Fondlewife, Sir Penurious Trifle, Buck, and Cadwaller, he was in nothing so successful as his "Tea," with Wilkinson for his pupil. The latter unexpectedly gave an imitation of the imitator, which had to be frequently repeated in spite of Foote's dislike to it. After a journey to Edinburgh, Foote returned to the Irish capital in the winter of 1759-60, playing the round of his parts, in addition to Shylock, and Don Lewis in "Love Makes a Man"; yet his "Tea" was the great attraction of the season. During this engagement he tried a new comedy, "The Minor," which failed. He returned to London in some ill-humour, as may be judged from a letter to Garrick from Murphy, who describes him at the Bedford "dashing away at everybody and everything." "Have you had good success in Dublin, Mr. Foote?" "Pooh! There was not a shilling in the county except what the Duke of Bedford, and I, and Mr. Rigby, have brought away. Woodward is caterwauling there, and Barry, like a wounded snake, and Mossop sprawling about," etc.

Nothing daunted by the failure of his comedy in Dublin, Foote re-wrote "The Minor," and produced it at the Haymarket, where its success was great and instantaneous, the play running there to crowded houses for forty nights, and being afterwards carried, though not without some opposition, to Drury Lane. In it Foote was terribly satirical in the character of Mrs. Cole, with which he

doubled the part of Mr. Smirk, in addition to dressing at and imitating Whitfield to the life when he spoke the epilogue. His hit at the Tottenham Court Road preacher provoked a controversy in which Whitfield's friends got worsted, and it also drew from Foote an admirable defence of the stage, and his definition of comedy. "What institution, human or divine," he asks, "has not been perverted by bad men to bad purposes? I wish we had not a notorious instance before us. Men have been drunk with wine: must, then, every vine be destroyed? Religion has been made a cloak for debauchery and fraud: must we, then, extirpate all religion? While there are such cities in the world as London, amusements must be found out, as occupation for the idle, as relaxation for the active. All that sound policy can do is to take care that such only are established as are, if not useful in their tendency, at least harmless in their consequence." He then vindicates "The Minor" from the designation of it by his assailant as a farce. He defines comedy as an exact representation of the peculiar manners of that people among whom it is performed. "Its province is to punish folly as the State punishes crime, by making its faithful ridicule of particular offenders an example to the community." This, he points out, he had aimed at in "The Minor," believing its characters to be not strained above the modesty of nature, nor the treatment of them unsuitable or inconsistent. "It is not," he adds, "the extent, but the objects of a piece that must establish its title; a piece of one act may prove an excellent comedy, and a play of five a most execrable farce."

Foote's increasing popularity induced him to become joint-manager, with Murphy, of Drury Lane, for the summer season of the year following, when he produced his admirable comedy of "The Liar." In "The Orators" Foote next caricatured George Faulkner, a Dublin gentleman, unhappily possessing only one leg, an infirmity which might have spared him from Foote's ridicule. However, he was transferred to the Haymarket stage, wooden leg and all. Encouraged by Lord Chesterfield, Faulkner brought an action in the Dublin Law Courts against Foote, and secured a verdict, although he obtained only nominal damages. But the wit had his revenge, for two months later he put judge and jury, counsel and all, into a comic scene, which he played at the Haymarket. The same season produced the enjoyable farce of "The Mayor of Garrett." Foote had now reached the height of his

popularity. He held his own in all classes of society, drove as splendid horses as any man intown, kept up magnificent establishments both in London and the country, and was famous for his dinners and wines. Yet withal, to his credit be it said, he always gave the best place in his regard to the lights and followers of literature. One night, when peers had been unable to obtain admission to the overcrowded theatre, he put himself to grave inconvenience to get Gray and Mason into a side-box; and when a flippant, fine lady of the theatre complained of the hum-drum man Goldsmith was in the green-room compared to the figure he made in his poetry, he explained to her with delicate wit that the reason of it was that the muses were better companions than the players. At this very time the return from the Continent of the King's brother is described: "The Duke of York, on his arrival, went first to his mother, then to his Majesty, and directly from them to Mr. Foote."

The first real shadow now fell on Foote's life. In riding a too-spirited horse, while on a visit to Lord Mexborough, he was thrown and so severely hurt that his left leg had to be amputated. "Now I shall indeed take off old Faulkner to the life," was his first remark when what he had to suffer was announced to him. But he keenly felt his affliction, despite his assumed calmness. His letter to Garrick, besides displaying the real good feeling which existed between these two men, shows this. He praises Mrs. Garrick, and says, from what he has seen and all he has heard, Garrick will have more to regret when either of them dies than any man in the kingdom. And then he fears he has explained himself but imperfectly: "I do not know whether the expression be clear in the last period but one, but I mean your separation, whichever occasions it—but, in truth," he adds, "I am very weak, in pain, and can procure no sleep save by the aid of opiates." He concludes by hoping that he may be spared to express in person some part of his thankfulness to dear Mr. Garrick for all his attention and kindness. As some sort of compensation for his affliction, the King, at the request of the Duke of York, granted him an exclusive patent for performances at the Haymarket Theatre from May 14 to September 14 every year. He thereupon almost entirely rebuilt the house, erecting a handsome new front to it, and, on May 14, 1767, opened it with a "Prelude" of infinite wit. From this date until 1776 he kept the

theatre open every summer with pieces written and mainly supported by himself—a wonderful record in the history of the stage. During these nine years he visited Dublin and Edinburgh frequently, and he produced nine original plays, eight of which were three-act comedies. Most famous of these plays are: "The Devil on Two Sticks," "The Lame Lover," "The Maid of Bath," "The Nabob," "The Bankrupt," "The Cozeners," and "The Capuchin."

The bitterest blow which Foote ever received—a blow which crushed and shortened his life—was dealt by a woman's hand, or, rather, by one who had lost all claim to the dignity and honour of womanhood by her notorious vice. The Duchess of Kingston heard, through the Lord Chamberlain's office, that Foote had satirised her in the character of Lady Kitty Crocodile in a play entitled "The Trip to Calais," then in the licenser's hands. After attempting to bribe Foote to suppress the play, she used her influence with Lord Hertford, and the license was refused. A bitter war raged between this infamous creature and the brilliant wit, in which the Duchess got the worst of it at first. But she called to her aid a man as utterly devoid of principle, as vicious as herself, and more reckless. This fellow, one Jackson, an Irish parson, it is worth noting, afterwards became involved in treasonable practices before the outbreak of the Irish Rebellion, and poisoned himself in prison on the eve of the day appointed for his execution. Supported by a supply of unlimited money from the Duchess of Kingston, this unscrupulous rascal poured forth volley upon volley of libel upon Foote. "It is appalling even yet," says a writer in 1854, "to turn to the newspapers and pamphlets of that day and see the cold and cruel persistence in the attacks against the great humourist, into whose vortex even journals calling themselves respectable were drawn." There is on record a letter from the Duchess which appeared in one of the public prints, which, together with its sequel, is thus described by Walpole:—"Drunk with triumph, she would give the mortal blow with her own hand, but as the instrument she chose was a *goose*-quill, the stroke recoiled upon herself. She wrote a letter to "The Evening Post" which not the lowest of her class who tramp in patterns would have set her mark to. Billingsgate from a ducal coronet was inviting; however, Foote, with all the delicacy she should have used, replied only with wit, irony,

and confounding satire. The Pope will not be able to wash out the spots with all the holy water in the Tiber. I imagine she will escape a trial, but Foote has given her the *coup de grace.*" Soon after he wrote to Mason :—"What a *chef d'œuvre* is Foote's answer!" to which Mason replies, "I agree with you in thinking Foote's answer one of the very best things in the English language, and prefer it in its kind. Mr. Pope's letter to Lord Hervey is nothing to it." She was so shortly after this outburst arraigned before her peers on a charge of bigamy, convicted, stripped of her title of Duchess, and only escaped severer punishment by the death of Lord Bristol, her first husband's brother, which gave her still the right to the privilege of peerage. Foote, smarting under the secret libels of the Irish parson, recast "The Trip to Calais," cut out Lady Kitty Crocodile, and put in, under the guise of a low Irish pimp and pander, Dr. Viper, who was no other than his hidden assailant, Dr. Jackson. He produced the play at the Haymarket a few months after the Kingston trial, under the title of "The Capuchin," and it was acted, despite opposition, until the theatre closed. The following year, 1776, saw the close of Foote's career as a dramatist. Jackson, instigated by the erstwhile Duchess, was determined to hound Foote to death. So a discarded coachman of Foote's, a fellow of the worst character, whose subsequent proceedings branded him with unutterable infamy, was found and induced to make a charge of a vile nature against his old master. The case no sooner came for trial than the charge was blown to the winds. It was speedily shown that the infamous instrument of revenge had grossly perjured himself, and the special jury, even refusing to turn round in the box, cried out with one voice, "Not Guilty." Murphy hastened from the Court with the glad tidings, when his old friend, far from manifesting joy at so perfect a deliverance, fell to the ground in strong hysterics. The venom had done its work; the shot had struck home. The end was near. He let his theatre to the elder Coleman for an annuity of sixteen hundred pounds, with permission to play so often on such terms that he could make four hundred pounds more. But he played only thrice under this arrangement. In January, 1777, a few months before the final scene, he is present at the Queen's Drawing Room, singled out for special recognition by the Sovereign, made to feel that his

fame is unsullied, his old wit still asserting it. He played for the last time at the Haymarket Theatre in May, of this year, in "The Devil on Two Sticks." But his cheeks were lank and withered, his eyes had lost their fire, and his person was sunk and emaciated. Five months later he left London for Dover, on his way to France. He arrived there on October 20, 1777, attended by one servant. Next morning, at breakfast, he was seized with a shivering fit, under which he sank in three hours. His faithful treasurer and friend, Jewel, conveyed the body back to town. But before leaving Dover he desired to leave behind some memorial of the man he knew so well. So he ordered an epitaph to be placed in the Church of St. Mary, which speaks volumes in favour of the wit. The inscription says nothing of his humour or his genius, his writing or his acting, but it mentions that he had a "hand open as the day to melting charity." He was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, near Henry Lawes, "one who called Milton friend," Tom Brown, Anne Bracegirdle, and Thomas Betterton. No memorial marks his last resting-place.

Our Musical-Box.

BUT a few weeks ago it was my pleasurable duty to record in the columns of The Theatre a few of the leading incidents of Franz Liszt's brief, but triumphal, sojourn in this metropolis, during which English musicians—and, indeed, the British public in general—did all that was within their power to make amends to the great composer and executant for the coldness of his reception in this country five and forty years ago. At the same time was published in this magazine a humble metrical tribute to Liszt's great genius and many noble qualities, the verses having been recited to him by a skilled elocutionist on the occasion of his last public appearance in London. I rejoice to think—now that that sad word "last" has acquired additional mournfulness from the fact that Franz Liszt is no more—that my "Farewell" gave him some slight pleasure; at least, so he told me; for neither I nor any of those who, like myself, admired, venerated, and loved him, can, or shall ever again be able to, do aught to gratify or amuse him. He has been taken from a world that he adorned, and in which, when he was amongst us the other day, he constituted the only living musical link between Beethoven and Brahms. By his death the nineteenth century, now drawing towards its close only too gloomily, from an artistic point of view, has lost its typical

musical representative. Throughout sixty-six years—two-thirds of its total span—Liszt was identified with its musical history as a pianist of surpassing capacities, and for more than fifty of those years as a composer no less versatile than original. He was a "Wunderkind," and made his début as a pianist at Oedenburg in 1820, when nine years old; his first musical composition that found its way into print was published at Vienna three years later in a collection of pianoforte works written by the most eminent artists of that day. At the age of fourteen he composed an operetta, which, under the title of "Don Sanche," was brought out at the French Académie Royale, and very favourably received. Ludwig van Beethoven, to whom he repeatedly played in the year 1823, recognised him as a musical genius of the first flight, and characterised his executant powers as marvellous and unprecedented. From his tenth to his seventy-sixth year his career was one long uninterrupted series of artistic triumphs and social successes. The aristocracies of Germany, France, and Russia were at his feet; reigning sovereigns eagerly sought his personal friendship, which a few of them shared with the leading poets, composers, authors, critics, painters, sculptors, and singers of the Continent. Amongst the shining lights of literature and art admitted to his intimacy during his "salad days"—more than half a centnry ago—were Alphonse de Lamartine, Heinrich Heine, Victor Hugo, Jacob Meyerbeer, George Sand, Alfred de Musset, Frédéric Chopin, Delacroix, Hector Berlioz, Honoré de Balzac, and Eugène Sue. By these leading spirits of the age he was regarded with an admiring affection almost amounting to worship. Like his friend Chopin—the only pianist at that time who could emulate his feats of extemporisation, and who lived for some years *maritalement* with Madame Dudevant—he contracted a *liaison* with a lady of conspicuous literary ability, the Comtesse d'Agoult (her *nom de plume* was Daniel Stern), who bore him two daughters and a son. Of these only one survives him, Cosima Wagner, formerly Von Buelow, the widow of the man whom of all men Liszt most deeply reverenced. His only son and his elder daughter, who married M. Emile Ollivier, once a Minister of State under the Napoleonic *régime*, died during their illustrious father's lifetime. Some years after his connection with Madame d'Agoult had terminated, he was impelled by circumstances of a very curious and romantic nature to take holy orders in the Roman Catholic Church, thereby binding himself to celibacy for the remainder of his days. He never, however, became an officiating priest, although the late Pope Pius IX. advanced him to the rank of *Canonico* in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and Cardinal Prince Hohenlohe endowed him with the small benefice of Albano—a sinecure to which a small residence within easy reach of the Eternal City was attached. I visited him at Albano in the spring of 1870, when he told me that in all probability he should continue to dwell there for the rest of his life; but he quitted his pretty little canonry shortly after his

friend the Cardinal left Rome, and thenceforth resided successively in Weimar and Pesth. After entering the Church he devoted his creative genius exclusively to the composition of sacred music.

It is, perhaps, worthy of mention, as an illustration of the steadfast conservatism animating British journalism, that Liszt's proper ecclesiastical title of Canon, which he held for nearly twenty years, although acknowledged and accorded to him in the columns of the German, Austrian, and Italian press, was persistently ignored by all the leading London newspapers, which continued to designate him as the "Abbé" Liszt to the end, and even described him thus incorrectly in their obituary notices. During his stay here last April he was chatting to me in the highest spirits one night at Henry Irving's rooms at the Lyceum Theatre, and cross-examined me with humorous earnestness as to the possible reasons that could have induced my colleagues to persevere in styling him "the Abbé" when his correct predicate was "the Canon." "With us in Hungary and Austria," he smilingly observed, "quite a different custom obtains. We are apt, out of exaggerated politeness, to confer a step of rank upon the person with whom we happen to be conversing. If he be a Captain, we address him as 'Herr Major;' if an Aulic Councillor (Hofrath) as 'Herr Geheimrath' (Privy Councillor); if a Canon, as 'Mr. Dean.' The wife of a grocer is spoken to as 'Gracious Lady' by her acquaintances. How often have I had brevet rank bestowed upon me by my interlocutors in my own country! But here—and in Paris too, where you gentlemen of the fourth estate claim to be better informed and more accurate in your statements than your *confrères* of Austria and Germany—the reporters are unanimous in insisting that I am only an Abbé. Explain to me why this is so." I pointed out to the venerable Canon that certain traditions were hallowed in London newspaper offices; that for sixteen consecutive years the *Times*, knowing better all the while, had deliberately misspelt the name of the first statesman in Europe; that another great metropolitan journal had observed a similar course of action with respect to the patronymic of Prince Gortchakow, although it had as consistently spelt Cracow correctly, instead of altering it to Cracoff; that the principle observed (if any) in describing eminent men was to do so in a manner to which the general public was accustomed, unfettered by any mere actualities; and, finally, that—just as Napoleon the Great continued to be spoken and written of by his most fervent admirers as "Le Petit Caporal" long after he had ascended the Imperial throne of France—he, Canon Liszt, had taken root in the popular mind of England as the Abbé Liszt, which circumstance he must be good enough to put up with as one of the penalties of greatness. He laughed, and said, "Nothing can be more satisfactory to my vanity than your explanation, my dear friend, for you have associated me with Bismarck, Gortchakow, and Napoleon I.; but I *am* Canon

Liszt, for all that, and even your powerful English press cannot make me other than I am!"

With Franz Liszt's magnificent achievements as a conductor and operatic manager in Weimar, as well as with the nature and special characteristics of his musical compositions and literary works, the daily and weekly periodicals of this country have dealt so exhaustively that I will not attempt in this place once more to go over such well-trodden ground. Some personal reminiscences of the great Hungarian musician may, however, not prove altogether devoid of interest to the readers of The Theatre; whereof, such as they are, I venture to jot them down here. I was introduced to Liszt a little over seventeen years ago, in Vienna, by Johann von Herbeck, at that time the orchestral conductor of the "Gesellschaft der Musikfrennde," the finest body of instrumental executants in Europe. This society, having resolved to produce Liszt's "Legend of St. Elizabeth," was busily engaged in rehearsing that ponderous work during the early spring of 1869; and Liszt came up specially from Pesth to the Kaiserstadt in order to attend the last three rehearsals and the initial performance. As he entered the Redouten Saal, in which the "Probe" was going on, and the instrumentalists caught sight of his stately head and flowing grey mane, every man rose in his place, and greeted the master with enthusiastic plaudits of welcome. I had never seen him "in his habit as he lived" before, and was greatly impressed by the grave beauty of his face and the dignity of his demeanour. When the rehearsal was over Herbeck took me up to Liszt, and said, "Master, here is an Englishman who, strange to say, loves and understands music." Liszt looked at me steadily for ten seconds or so; then a bland, compassionate smile relaxed the normal severity of his strongly marked features as he turned his eyes upon Herbeck, from whom he had just heard a statement which, judged by his own settled convictions, appeared in the highest degree improbable. In the flesh he was silent; but I felt sure that he was saying in the spirit, "Excellent, over-credulous Herbeck; I know that you believe what you say to be true, because you are the kindest creature alive, and also the most easily taken in. But I know better!" He was, however, extremely gracious to me throughout his stay in Vienna that spring, although I could not help noticing that he studiously avoided conversing with me upon the subject of music, with which, doubtless, he deemed that my nationality debarred me from any acquaintance, even of the most rudimentary character. Fortunately for me, my intimacy with all the leading musicians of the Kaiserstadt procured me several opportunities of hearing him play in private houses. His pianism was to me a most surprising revelation. What do I say?—a series of revelations, which disclosed to me capacities of the clavichord thitherto undreamt of, although I had heard every great pianist in Europe play, from Mendelssohn to Rubinstein.

Liszt's pianoforte playing seventeen years ago, when I first listened to it, awe-stricken and enraptured, was in more than one respect absolutely unique. Besides having overcome every technical difficulty excogitated by composers for that instrument up to his time, he had invented numberless new ones, some few of which no performer but himself has as yet succeeded in vanquishing. Of these the most laborious and intricate were to him manifestly mere pastime, costing him no effort whatsoever. His long dapper fingers unravelled their tangled skeins of notes as easily as though they had been diatonic scales or plain-sailing arpeggi. His force and flexibility were alike inimitable ; and the miracles he worked upon the key-board were so intrinsically beautiful, as well as amazing, that—compared with them—all I had theretofore heard and seen in the way of first-class pianism appeared to me as naught. The abnormal length and elasticity of Liszt's fingers enabled him, in particular, to outdo all other executants in what I will take leave to designate as "orchestral" pianoforte playing. Tenths were by him as easily compared as are octaves by ordinary pianists; he could play them rapidly in sequence, together with as many intermediate notes as he had finger-tips to touch. With relation to *Technik*—a German term inadequately rendered in English by the word execution—he appeared to plunge his hands into the key-board at random, as though he were vaguely bent upon wresting from it passages of inconceivable difficulty, which he then scattered about him with easy and gracious liberality. It was, however—as I pointed out in a short treatise on his playing which I published two years ago, and from which I will crave permission to quote a few passages of which the venerable Canon was pleased to express his approval last April—when extemporising that Liszt was wont to "let himself go," giving full vein to his fancy or humour of the moment, and indulging to the top of his bent in exaggerations of technical complication. At such times, stimulated by strong psychical excitement, he would put forth to their utmost executive limits the exceptional physical resources with which nature had gifted him, and would achieve—faultlessly and with an indescribable *désinvolture*—what to any other pianist had been impossible. Practice and volition had so sternly disciplined his fingers, and accustomed them to fulfil so unfailingly the orders transmitted to them from his brain, that, in all probability, the word "difficulty" (in connection with *Technik*) had ceased to possess any exact significance, as far as Liszt the executant was concerned. Nobody who heard him improvise, as I did in Vienna, and subsequently in Rome, could doubt that—absolutely free from any kind of preoccupation as to the ability of his hands to execute whatever he might call upon them to do—he gave play to the creative and constructive faculties of his intellect without troubling himself in the least about the trained mechanisms attached to his wrists. However unexampled might be the sequences or strangely intermingled the groups of notes suggested by his imagination, he unhesitatingly gave them expression, being perfectly certain that his executant machinery could and would carry them out forthwith, in obedience to an unconscious exercise of will on his part. This is indisputably one of the most extraordinary powers that can be

acquired and wielded by a human being. To be able, without an instant's warning or preparation—for, in these cases, execution is exactly simultaneous with conception—to reproduce in organised combinations or successions of sounds the phantasies of genius or problems of science is a capacity of such superhuman seeming to those who possess it not that it must, I should think, be utterly incomprehensible—even incredible—to the vast majority of mankind. Were the marvels of Liszt's improvisation described in cold blood to any unmusical person of fair average intellect, it would not surprise me at all if his or her only comment upon the narrative should be "I do not believe a word of it, because it is impossible!" As a matter of fact, extemporisation of this exceptional class—like the transposition of an orchestral score at sight by a person playing it on the piano, a feat which I have seen performed by Rubinstein and Richter—is, and must ever remain, a more than Eleusinian mystery to the children of men in general.

At the time to which I refer it was—at least, to a mediocre but conscientious pianist like myself—at once supreme joy and abject despair to listen to an extemporisation by Liszt, when he happened to be excited by some more than usually sympathetic theme or happy fancy. It was inimitably blissful for the moment; but it blighted one's self-appreciation, and suggested dread vows of renunciation, as far as pianoforte-playing was concerned, for ever and ever thereafter. His plurality of touches—pianists will understand what I mean—was an inexhaustible source of rapturous surprises to me. Now, his touch was as light as the fall of a snowflake or the flutter of a butterfly's wing; now as rich as three-piled Genoa velvet; now as clinging as a lover's kiss; anon as hard and bright as the blow of a diamond-headed hammer. Under his fingers the instrument—to others a machine of readily exhaustible tone-resources—sang, talked, laughed, wept, and mimicked orchestral effects without number. It was more than talent—it was high genius, of the executant order, that was possessed by the tall, slender, Dantesque Magyar priest, once the most successful subduer in Europe of the fair sex, and the object of an adoration that too frequently lured him into strange, tragical adventures, expressing itself (on the part of his fair votaries) in all manner of extravagances of action—some, by the way, no less comical than eccentric. Not the only damsel of high degree, by many an one, whose head was completely turned by the prince of *improvisatori* was that infatuated maid of honour at the Court of Saxe-Weimar, whose strong personal flavour of stale tobacco mystified her family, friends, and fellow-courtiers for several consecutive months. One day, an accident revealed the amazing fact that Frauelein von —— permanently wore in her bosom, as a sacred relic, an old cigar-stump which Liszt had thrown away in the street under her eyes. She had reverently picked up the unsavoury morsel, enshrined it in a massive golden locket enriched with the monogram "F. L." in brilliants, and suspended it round her virgin neck, whence it steadfastly emitted the sickly reek that so long perplexed the Grand-Ducal household. I have seen the proudest dames and damsels of the Austrian

aristocracy crouching round Liszt on the bare boards of a concert-room platform, in attitudes with which the twenty love-sick maidens of *Patience* have familiarised the British public, and gloating fondly upon his expressive, animated countenance. In my presence stately Roman princesses have seized his hands, and kissed them rapturously again and again. No other artist whom I have ever known was so passionately petted by beautiful and high-born women as was Franz Liszt; but successive generations of lovely enthusiasts strove in vain to spoil him. He always held his own with them; the only mistress to whom he was inflexibly faithful was the Art of Music, with which he kept up the tenderest of *liaisons* throughout, at least, half-a-century.

In Vienna and Rome, at different times, I heard Liszt play some of Beethoven's masterpieces, as well as several of his own compositions and "transcriptions"; moreover, he extemporised twice in my presence, the first time at great length upon Schubert's "Staendchen," and the second, more briefly, upon Mozart's "Batti, batti." I was therefore enabled to take stock, so to speak, of his various qualities as a pianist in their three principal developments; and in all three he appeared to me not only unrivalled, but unapproachable. His interpretation of Beethoven's works, while distinguished from that of wellnigh every other eminent cotemporary soloist by devout fidelity to the *tempi* and worded or marked instructions of the composer, was at once romantic, passionate, and dignified. All the meanings of the Master's conceptions were intelligibly expounded. I knew the notes of the "Appassionata" and the "Adieu" by heart, having played them myself scores of times, and listened to interesting renderings of them very frequently; but I had never understood their full significance until it was revealed to me by Franz Liszt. Either he merged his own individuality in that of the dead composer, or the spirit of Beethoven moved him for the time being. At any rate, the result of either psychical process was one never to be forgotten by any musician whose ears it may have reached. Richard Wagner, whose capacity for enthusiasm was always under the control of his critical faculty, frequently confessed that words failed him to express his admiration of the unique gift that empowered Liszt to invest himself for the time being with the personality of any composer whose works he might be engaged in rendering. In relation to this speciality of his illustrious father-in-law Wagner once wrote as follows:—"He who has enjoyed frequent opportunities, particularly in a small intimate circle, of hearing Liszt play Beethoven's music must have realised the fact that the playing in question was not mere reproduction, but actual production. The real boundary-line between these two achievements is not so easily settled as most people believe; but this I have ascertained beyond dispute—that in order to reproduce Beethoven one must be able to produce with him. It would be impossible to make this comprehensible to those who, as long as they have lived, have heard nothing but ordinary performances and professional renderings of Beethoven's pianoforte works. In the course of time I have gained so melancholy an insight

into the evolution and essence of such renderings that I had rather not wound anybody's feelings by expressing myself more clearly with regard to them. On the other hand, I would ask all musicians who have heard Beethoven's Op. 106 or 111 played by Liszt to friends in private what they previously knew about those compositions, and what they learned of them upon those occasions? If this was reproduction, assuredly it was worth much more than all the sonatas 'reproducing' Beethoven which are 'produced' by our pianoforte composers in imitation of those imperfectly comprehended works. The peculiarity of Liszt's development as a musician was simply this—that he did at the piano what others do with pen and ink; and it is undeniable that even the most original composer, during his first period, does nothing but reproduce. At Weimar once I saw Liszt conducting a rehearsal of 'Tannhaeuser,' and was wonder-stricken in recognising my second self in him. What I had felt in composing that music, he felt in performing it; what I wanted to express when I wrote it down, he expressed in giving it sound." The above has always struck me as a singularly just and subtle definition of Liszt's genius, which was more distinctly executant than creative.

From my own experience of his pianism I should say that to hear him play his own compositions or arrangements *en petit comité* was almost to hear him extemporise. I have his own authority for stating that when he performed them in public he made a point of adhering to their printed text; but in the *salon* or club-room, surrounded by intimate friends or approved musicians, he could seldom resist the temptation of experimentalising in novel treatments or cadences. Moreover, he especially delighted in surprising *virtuosi* and *dilettanti* familiar with his pianoforte works by introducing thereinto new episodes or effects. I particularly remember hearing him deal in this startling way with his superb transcriptions of "Faust" and "Der fliegende Hollaender" at a *soirée* given by the German Club at Rome in December, 1869, to the rapturous amazement of all the pianists present, most of whom were "note-perfect" in those musical *chefs-d'œuvre* of mechanical contrivance. As he concluded the "Faust" *morceau* with an improvised cadence that was a miracle of execution, Cardinal Haynald, the Archbishop of Kalocza, Liszt's dearest friend and former schoolmate—himself, moreover, an excellent pianist—threw his arms round his fellow-countryman's neck, kissed him on both cheeks, and then, turning towards the audience, exclaimed—"Was there ever a creature so richly gifted of God, so fertile in invention, so strangely empowered to realise in sound the beautiful thoughts that incessantly surge up from the depths of his soul to its surface? We must all reverence as well as love this great man, recognising in him an elect recipient of Divine favour, grace, and inspiration!" Liszt, though usually indifferent to applause and tributes of praise, was visibly touched by the heartfelt words of his old friend, and straightway gave vent to his emotion in an outburst of Hungarian melody, harmonised and ornamented with the utmost richness and elegance. *Haud obliviscari!* Scarcely less memorable to me was an incident that occurred

one evening during the Œcumenical winter at a musical *soirée* given by the Princess O———. Liszt's Symphonic Poem "Tasso," arranged for two pianos, happened to be lying on one of the magnificent instruments that stood side by side—head and tail—in the Princess's music-room, where some sixty or seventy personages of Roman society were assembled, amongst them the Canon of Albano. Whilst chatting with his hostess, Liszt picked up the "Tasso" arrangement by chance, asked her whether she had heard it, and on receiving a reply in the negative, said that he would gladly make it known to her, if she could find any one amongst her guests to play it with him. There were several Italian pianists, virtuosi and amateurs, present, but none of them would venture to attempt so difficult a work at sight, especially in conjunction with its composer, of whom one and all evidently stood in awe. Archbishop Haynald (he had not then received the red hat), whose rooms were next to mine at the Albergo di Roma, and who had placed his excellent grand piano at my disposal immediately upon his arrival in the Eternal City, came up to me and said—"*Hoeren Sie mal, mein Lieber!* you have played a good many hard pieces (*schwere Stuecke*) at sight with me during the past six weeks. Are you afraid of Liszt? He wants somebody to take the second piano with him, and try his 'Tasso.' I should like to do it myself, but am afraid of the fatigue. What do you say? Will you make the attempt? The thing is difficult enough—more than enough." I thought of Liszt's dubitative smile, when Herbeck had introduced me to him as an Englishman who "knew music," and at once replied "Will your Grandeur vouch for me? I am not afraid of the great man, for the truly strong are generally merciful; and if I break down, not being a professional pianist, I shall manage to survive the disgrace of failure." Haynald took me by the arm and led me up to the illustrious compatriot, saying "Franz, thou knowest this young man. He can read music well; he has done so with me again and again. He is ambitious to play with thee, and has the audacity to essay thy 'Tasso'! Wilt thou try him on my recommendation?" "Certainly I will," replied Liszt; and, after addressing a few kindly, reassuring words to me, forthwith took his seat at one piano, motioning me to the other. I felt as I suppose men feel when they have been told off for a forlorn hope and are awaiting the signal to advance. However, I contrived somehow to follow the Canon's superb leading, and not to put him out; the "fearsome foursome" went off without a hitch, and when it was over Liszt held out his hand to me, smiled benignly, and said only three words—"Herbeck avait raison." The other day, when my London home was honoured by his presence, he reminded me of our "quatre-mains" in Rome, more than sixteen years ago, and told me that he had written to Cardinal Haynald the same day, telling his Eminence that he (Liszt) was going to lunch with the English amateur who used to play pianoforte duets with the Archbishop of Kalocza during Rome's last winter under the Papal *régime*. I mention this fact as an instance of the clearness and tenacity of his memory at the age of seventy-five, only three months before his death. On the same occasion he alluded to several musical *ana* of that memorable winter, incidents

which I had completely forgotten, and especially recalled to my remembrance the excellent playing of a Polish pupil of his, then a stripling of twenty, now a prosperous P.F. teacher, and the father of half-a-dozen children; also of his (Liszt's) having played one evening at poor Harry Arnim's to Prince Frederick of Hohenzollern, the King of Roumania's younger brother, upon whom Liszt's inimitable extemporising produced no visible impression whatever. "And no wonder," added the great *virtuoso*, "for all the Hohenzollerns I have ever known cared nothing for music, which old Prince Albrecht once told me he regarded as 'an expensive noise.' That was the man who once said about his own son, Albrecht the younger, now Regent of Brunswick, 'He cannot be a true Prussian Prince, for he does not admire women, never gets drunk, and even plays the organ!' *(spielt sogar die Orgel)*."

Of the graceful and thoughtful kindness which I and mine received at different times from Canon Liszt I could write enough to fill all the pages of this magazine; but will forbear, having already occupied nearly the whole space placed at my disposal for the current month. I cannot, however, bring these notes to a conclusion without reminding their readers that the dead composer to whom they refer was one of the most disinterested, generous, and charitable men who ever lived. At least one-half of his enormous earnings, which may be reckoned by hundreds of thousands of pounds, has been given away to the poor, the suffering, and the unfortunate; to encourage struggling talent and commemorate surpassing genius; to further the culture of art, spread its doctrines far and wide, and promote its intelligent worship in every civilised European country. To Franz Liszt, in common with the late Ludwig von Wittelsbach, belongs the honour of having extricated Richard Wagner from a slough of despond and dilated his heart with joyful hope when it was all but broken by despair. When Liszt did Wagner the greatest service one composer could do another he knew full well that the disappointed, soured Saxon musician disliked and distrusted him; but that knowledge did not deter him from carrying out his magnanimous purpose. For this alone mankind was his debtor—and for how many more noble deeds? For scores which have reached public cognisance, and hundreds of which he never breathed a word, even to his most intimate friends. What life had to give was his—love, friendship, popularity, dignities, distinctions, and ample means, which last he held in trust for the deserving poor. Franz Liszt's was a beautiful career, teeming with light, sweetness, and beneficence. "Take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again."

A few words must here be said about some of the new music forwarded to me during the past month. The veteran Charles Salaman—a cotemporary of Liszt, and, like him, a "Wunderkind" in the first quarter of our century—has produced three works of remark-

able merit—"Murmured Music," a tender setting of a genuinely poetical sonnet, written by his gifted son Malcolm; "Late, Late, so Late," a soprano song, to which the Poet Laureate has supplied verses of great beauty; and "My Star" (words by Edwin Arnold), a melodious rhapsody, the two opening bars of which indicate that the doyen of English composers has unconsciously been influenced by the spirit of Wagner, who commenced Walter von Stolzing's first song with a similar musical phrase. "My Star" will assuredly shine in many a concert room next season. All these novelties are published by Stanley Lucas, Weber and Co. Mr. Gerard Cobb, always melodious and scholarly, has added to his list of songs two clever settings of a set of verses, written by Mr. Frank Dempster for the "Century." Mr. Cobb calls these "Airs de Ballet—Polonaise et Schottische;" but he intends them to be sung, despite their saltatory titles. They are both very pretty, and furnished with interesting accompaniments—not meant, I should think, to be played at sight by the drawing-room pianist. The London Music Publishing Company has brought them out tastefully enough. Mr. Erskine Allon, under the same auspices, has put forward settings of six 17th Century songs, the value of which (settings) is unequal, whilst his "Sketches in Dance Rhythms" are all three worthy of cordial praise, the waltz in particular being charmingly fresh and flowing. Of the rubbish sent to me for notice I will say nothing. There was a good deal of it; more than usual. Truly, the ways of some music publishers are inscrutable!

Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

Our Play-Box.

"THE JILT."

An "entirely new English" comedy, in five acts, by Dion Boucicault.
Produced, for the first time in England, at the Prince's Theatre, on Thursday, July 29, 1886.

Myles O'Hara	Mr. Dion Boucicault.	Wilcox	Mr. Sydney Harcourt.
Sir Budleigh Woodstock...	Mr. J. G. Graham.	Cripps	Mr. Belton.
Lord Marcus Wylie ...	Mr. H. J. Lethcourt.	Kitty Woodstock ...	Miss Thorndyke.
Colonel Tudor	Mr. John Billington.	Lady Millicent ...	Miss Myra Holme.
Geoffrey Tudor	Mr. Frank Rodney.	Mrs. Welter	Mrs. Mary Barker.
Mr. James Daisy	Mr. J. G. Taylor.	Phyllis Welter ...	Miss Webster.
Rev. Mr. Spooner... ...	Mr. E. W. Gardiner.	Mrs. Pincott	Miss Le Thiere.

With every desire to speak in all kindliness of so accomplished an actor and clever dramatic author as Mr. Dion Boucicault, it can hardly be said that "The Jilt" is worthy of the writer of "London Assurance" and "The Colleen Bawn." Even Mr. Boucicault's best pieces are stagey, that is to say, they smack more of the footlights than of nature, but they are so cleverly constructed, and the dialogue is so neat and epigrammatic that they win acceptance even while we are perfectly conscious of their faults. "The Jilt" is by no means a good specimen of Mr. Boucicault's work, and this "Last fruit off an old tree" will not advance his reputation.

The story is a simple one. Lady Woodstock has married a Yorkshire

baronet of that name, and, unfortunately, jilted another lover to do so. He dies, and somewhat brutally sends her letters to a rascally turfite, Lord Marcus Wylie, to present to her husband. Lord Marcus wants to marry the baronet's sister, who is an heiress, and he blandly proposes to Lady Woodstock that if he does not show her husband the letters she will aid him to win that young lady's hand. She promptly declines, and he is going to carry out the dead man's revenge, when a certain Myles O'Hara, oddly described as a gentleman-rider and turf prophet, comes upon the scene, frustrates the plans of the villain, in fine, old conventional fashion, and carries off the heiress himself. There is a great deal of racing in the play, and we are introduced to the interior of the stewards' stand at a steeplechase, in which a young lady rides in place of a gentleman jockey who is thrown, and she comes in victorious. Much blame has been cast upon Mr. Boucicault by critics who claim to be well-versed in the mysteries of the turf for all sorts of blunders regarding it in this play, which he has answered by referring to Messrs. Weatherby, and insisting that he is right. I know nothing about the turf, and do not presume to settle such a knotty point, but it seems to me that as an average English audience is not made up of touts and stable-boys, it does not matter in the least whether Mr. Boucicault's turf details are accurate or not. What is of importance is that his racing scene should be dramatically effective, and it cannot be said that it is; for it is absolutely unnecessary to the play, and has no connection with the real story of the piece. The best part of "The Jilt" is the dialogue, which is as bright as any the author has written, the lines which Mr. Boucicault has allotted to himself being particularly neat.

The play is well acted. Myles O'Hara is Myles-na-Coppaleen in a red wig, and a face daubed all over in an extraordinary fashion; surely Mr. Boucicault has forgotten the art of making-up. He plays, however, with the light touch of old days, and the irresistible twinkle in eyes that have not lost their brightness. Mr. J. G. Grahame acts in a pleasant and manly fashion as the Yorkshire baronet, though his dialect is not as correct as it might be, and Mr. Billington is a useful adjunct to the company. Mr. J. G. Taylor as a sort of tout plays with much force and humour, and Mr. Lethcourt is a capable representative of Lord Marcus Wylie. Miss Myra Holme plays Lady Woodstock with much quiet force, and, indeed, does well in an unsympathetic part, her appeal to her husband at the end possessing real pathos. Miss Thorndyke, a new comer from America, acts very brightly and pleasantly, and Miss Webster raises a small part into prominence by a bit of really emotional acting. It is curious, by the way, to hear her deliver a speech, in which other characters also take part concerning racing, a parody on the famous eulogy of Lady Gay Spanker's on hunting in "London Assurance." Since the production of "The Jilt" at the Prince's Theatre the author has pronounced it "the greatest of modern five-act comedies." I regret I cannot say "ditto" to Mr. Boucicault's modest utterance.

H. Savile Clarke.

"FAIR ROSAMUND."

This summer once more the Pastoral Players renewed, to our enjoyment and advantage, the delightful custom of "playing pastorals under realistic conditions." The scene was shifted from Coombe to Wimbledon, where, in a fair and tranquil bit of wood that looked like one of the opener and less tangled glades of the New Forest, was presented the love-idyll of Rosamund Clifford and King Henry. It was an adaptation for pastoral purposes, and in a form as closely pastoral as possible, from Lord Tennyson's fine and spirit-stirring play of "Becket"; done with skill, tact, and sympathy, by Mr. E. W. Godwin, the art director of the society. The contrast with the play acted under like conditions at Coombe last year was as absolute as possible. In place of the Thessaly of any age that fancy chose to assign, we had a picture in little of Plantagenet England. The change involved a necessary sacrifice of some of those elements of the picturesque which were used to such excellent and exquisite purpose in the production of "The Faithfull Shepherdesse." The gossamer garb, bright-hued, and deftly-draped, of the Greek shepherdesses was here replaced by the dull and lumpish costume of the British yokel in the 12th century. One could not but miss the tripping measures, rhythmic at once and blithe, which the Thessalian peasants trod round and about the high altar of Pan, to the music of sheep-bells and of pipes. Considered merely as a picture, "Fair Rosamund" was in no way comparable to "The Faithfull Shepherdesse"; but, this much admitted, let us hasten to suggest that the pictorial charm is not the only kind of charm one looks for in pastoral drama. The poetical spirit is the real essence of all such plays, and when there is question of pure and living poetry (considered apart from the question of the merely technical merits of the professional playwright) few of us, I imagine, would choose to be charmed by the oaten pipe of Fletcher to whom the alternative was given of listening to the lute of Tennyson. Indeed, on a question of poetry, the contest between these two would be somewhat less equal than the competition between Marsyas and Apollo; and the reward of Midas would be the fit reward of the judge who should pronounce for Fletcher. But in this sphere, the poetic gift alone is very rightly held to be less than all-sufficient, and nothing was more certain than that the choice of a play by the Laureate would be reproved, almost before the curtain had been raised, on the ancient plea (grown somewhat vapid) that Tennyson is no dramatist. This has been employed so often that it has become a sort of ready-made formula for anyone and everyone who will stoop to use it, and it was picked up and bandied freely enough by some who discussed the performance at Wimbledon the other day. This, of course, is not the place, and quite as certainly mine is not the authority, to argue a question which has vexed the wits, and divided the judgments of reputable critics in more countries than one. But it may be hinted, if only parenthetically, that in dismissing Tennyson as a dramatist there has been a too-great readiness to overlook or make little of the distinction which every student of literature must draw between the dramatist and the

playwright. A playwright Tennyson is not, but there seems a certain temerity in the position of the critic who would withhold a dramatic crown from the author of "Queen Mary," of "Harold," of "Becket," and—to speak of isolated studies—of "The Northern Farmer," and "St. Simeon Stylites." But let the question pass, for we have here no special concern with it. Enough that there is no lack of passion and action combined, and of individuality (what more shall a drama yield?) in "Becket"; and that the excision of some of the most masterly and masterful scenes, including the most masterful and masterly of all, left still a gem-like little story of love and pathos and passion, such as Tennyson alone amongst modern poets could have written for us. It should be superfluous to tell the tale of Rosamund Clifford and her love for Henry, and the love of that strange compound of kingly manhood, and sensuality, and strength, and weak petulance for Rosamund; and of the Woodstock bower, with its labyrinthine approaches, which none but Henry knew, but which Eleanor the Queen, inspired by jealousy and hate, discovered. The bower of Rosamond is the centre of the pastoral version of "Becket," and Rosamond herself is the central figure. Mr. Godwin's aim was to subordinate everything in the original to the love story which in reality is but an episode of "Becket," and this he has very adroitly and acceptably done The whole of the action passes in the outskirts of the bower, though of dramatic action proper there is, of course, not much, for it is a very simple tale that has to be unfolded. There is one love scene between the King and Rosamund, fresh and dewy in its poetry as the woodland verdure itself. Then, in the succeeding scene, the shadow of her coming tragedy is cast upon Rosamund; and from that we pass quickly to the tense and fervid scene between Rosamund and the Queen, in which the single passion of malignant and murderous hate in one woman is matched against the double passion of love and maternity in another woman, with all the force, variety, and concentrated energy of expression and suggestion which a great poet could bring to bear on such a situation. Nor did this fine scene lose anything—on the contrary, it gained immensely, by the manner in which it was acted. It would have been difficult to find a more acceptable exponent, physically and intellectually, of the part of Queen Eleanor than Miss Geneviève Ward. She looked what she was, the evil genius of the play; a dark and tragic figure. One almost felt that the sun ought to cease shining when she appeared from behind the thicket at the entrance to the bower, and with her first word she split the love-harmony of the scene. There is, perhaps, no living English actress who can give fitter or more realistic expression to words of hate, scorn, or anger blind and unrestrained; who can gloat so terribly over a fallen victim, or act out more consistently a scheme of horrible revenge. Her method, which is peculiarly that of the theatre, found itself well in keeping with the part of Eleanor—an actress to the tips of her fingers. And yet one was pricked every now and then by a thought that this strong and resonant declamation, this excellent by-play of eye and hand, and all these cunning and well-used artifices of the practised player would have been seen to better advantage between the painted wings of the stage

proper. A note was struck and sustained which seemed scarcely to tune with the rest. But perhaps the scene itself was to blame; it was so essentially dramatic. As a piece of acting, Miss Ward's Eleanor was perfect, and I am not sure but that acting, above everything else, was what the part of the Queen called for. It is not, however, the grey, grim figure of the Queen that haunts the memory so much as the soft, dreamlike, and half phantasmic figure of Rosamund. Perigot, the shepherd prince of Thessalian pastoral, has transformed himself into a mediæval princess, and the transformation was so complete that in the princess the prince was all forgotten. The figure was as ideally graceful, gracefully ideal, as before; but in the lineaments of this year's heroine there was no trace of the lineaments of last year's hero. Rosamund had been Rosamund always—we all felt that; and this will be the Rosamund of our memories for all time. This is the best skill of the player, that no other embodiment of the part is sought after or seems possible than the one which is before us. The delicate blue dress made Rosamund one with her surroundings, and in the love scene she moved and spoke like the fair, gentle creature who lives so distinctly in Tennyson's play. But Rosamund is something more than the mere romantic sweetheart of a king; the taunts of Eleanor bring out the woman and the mother in her; and here it was that, pitted against one of the most accomplished actresses on the stage, the amateur showed herself of equal resource; not a wit inferior in her understanding of the situation, and well able to act as finely and truly as she felt. The main charm of Lady Archibald Campbell's playing is its veracious simplicity, its ingenuousness, and freedom from the conventionalities and insincerities of the stage. There is only one actress (and she is the most natural) of whose style her own is in the least degree reminiscent; but she showed in this last and most trying act of "Fair Rosamund," as she had shown before in the most trying act of "The Faithfull Shepherdesse," that when occasion calls for its display she is no stranger to the technique of the actor's art. I think the professional stage has lost in her an actress who would have ranked highly. I am none the less glad that the professional stage is not destined to spoil her infinite and inimitable charm.

T. H.

Our Omnibus-Box.

America has sent us this summer clever Mr. Henry E. Dixey and Mr. Augustin Daly's talented company of comedians. Both Mr. Dixey and Mr. Daly's little band have been cordially received and appreciated in the metropolis, and, by way of return for the entertainment which we have derived from our American cousins, no less than four theatrical companies are on the point of starting for the United States. The month of October will see Mrs. Langtry and Miss Fortescue, Miss Violet Cameron and Mr. Lionel Brough, playing in

"We are always so pleased to welcome prominent American citizens."

JIM THE PENMAN.

Henrietta Leidy

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263, OXFORD STREET, W.

New York. During the same month Mr. Wilson Barrett will also set foot for the first time on American land. He opens at the Star Theatre, New York, on October 12, probably in "Claudian." In addition to the latter play, he will produce "Clito" in the United States as well as "Chatterton," "A Clerical Error," and Mr. Brandon Thomas's pathetic little play, "The Colour-Sergeant." He will also star in "Hamlet." Mr. Barrett will be supported during his American tour by Miss Eastlake, Mr. Charles Fulton, Mr. George Barrett, and other members of the Princess's company. Mr. Barrett's many admirers on this side of the water will watch with eagerness the reception extended to this admirable actor and excellent man on his first visit to the States. That he is held in high esteem here was amply proved by the success of the complimentary supper given to him on August 12, and his reception so far during his brief provincial tour has been marked by extraordinary demonstrations of approval.

Although America is robbing us of some of our favourites for a few months the London playgoer will have no cause to complain of his autumn fare. Already Mr. Henry Irving is on his way home after his much-needed rest and pleasure trip to the hospitable shores of the United States, and the Lyceum Theatre will re-open with "Faust" on September 11, with Mr. Irving as Mephistopheles, Miss Ellen Terry as Margaret, and Mrs. Chippendale as Martha. This number will scarcely have reached the public before the great autumn racing drama, "A Run of Luck," written by Messrs. Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris, will have been produced at Drury Lane. September brings us "Harvest," a new play, by Mr. H. Hamilton, of which report speaks most highly, at the Princess's Theatre, and "Sister Mary," with Miss Lingard and Mr. Leonard Boyne in their original parts, at the Comedy. Shakespeare will hold sway at the Olympic, where Mrs. Conover, nothing deterred by a hitherto relentless fate, essays to tempt fortune with a revival of "Macbeth" on a most elaborate scale. The Haymarket will be occupied by the re-production of "Jim the Penman," with Mr. E. S. Willard in the principal character. "The Road to Ruin" is still being played at the Vaudeville, while the neighbouring theatre, the Adelphi, is nightly crowded to excess by delighted crowds who laugh and cry over "The Harbour Lights." Mr. Willie Edouin and Miss Alice Atherton go to the Royalty to play in "Blackberries" and "Turned Up." Mr. Hermann Vezin in farcical comedy at the Opera Comique, Mr. Edward Compton in old comedy, and the successful farcical pieces, "The Schoolmistress" at the Court, and "The Pickpocket" at the Globe, should not be forgotten in this enumeration of London amusements, while comic opera is to be played at the Gaiety, the Prince's, and the Avenue Theatres.

Miss Henrietta Lindley, whose photograph appears in this number, is certainly one of our most accomplished, polished, and experienced

comedy-actresses. Her first appearance on the stage was made at the Haymarket Theatre, when she was scarcely fifteen years of age. At this time she played Augusta in "Our American Cousin," Maria in "The School for Scandal," Olivia in "Twelfth Night," Julia in "The Rivals," Zamora in "The Honeymoon," and other parts. She then went for a brief engagement to the Olympic Theatre, under the management of the late Horace Wigan, where she was the original Acoulina in "The Serf." Returning to the Haymarket, she remained there until her marriage, playing a varied round of comedy parts. In May, 1881, she returned to the stage to act Mrs. Blyth in the provincial tour of "The Colonel," in the course of which she acted before the Queen at Abergeldie. On leaving "The Colonel" company she played Kate Verity (the heroine) in the country tour of "The Squire." In January, 1883, she acted Adriana in Mr. John S. Clarke's revival of "The Comedy of Errors" at the Strand Theatre. In September of that year she went to the Court Theatre, where she acted Mrs. Chomondeley Brown in "The Millionaire." She was next seen at the Haymarket in April of this year, when she acted Lady Dunscombe in "Jim the Penman." Recently, during the absence of Lady Monckton, she played the part of Mrs. Ralston with remarkable fidelity to nature, and made a distinct success in an undertaking of a difficult nature. Miss Lindley has a refined, lady-like style which makes her invaluable in modern comedy.

Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, the subject of our other photograph, was born on September 20, 1851. "My first home," he recently stated, "was a Buckinghamshire farm-house; my father is a Buckinghamshire farmer, and my mother a farmer's daughter. My childhood was wholly spent in the country, and I had golden opportunities for studying and observing every phase of old village life in England before its transformation by railroad influences. It is, perhaps, to this accident that I owe, in a measure, the success of those sketches which my critics have been good enough to praise for their faithfulness. I did my utmost to get all the good I could out of the middle-class school to which I was sent, but I was barely thirteen when I went into the world to shift for myself. I soon began to pester the editors of magazines with essays, tales, and poems, but they were always returned with thanks. When I was eighteen I went to a theatre for the first time, and came away stage-struck. How well I remember the evening! It was the pit of the Haymarket before the reign of the Bancrofts. Miss Bateman was playing Leah, and Messrs. Compton and Kendal sustained the leading characters in an after-piece called "His First Champagne." Then the editors of magazines had a respite, and I transferred my attentions and importunities to the London managers. During the day I worked hard in a City warehouse; my evenings were passed in theatre-going and play-writing. The managers, however, made no sign; years went by, and

"I prize stage-play, the honest cheating."

BROWNING.

Henry Arthur Jones

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263. OXFORD STREET, W.

at last I accepted, almost in despair, a place in a Bradford office. Here I pined for a country life and fresh air amidst the smoke and dirt of a manufacturing town, and I rejoiced most heartily when at last I moved to the west of England, where I could in my leisure moments continue my study of home life. In the summer of 1879 I had the good fortune to send a little comedy, to which I had given the name of "A Clerical Error," to Mr. Wilson Barrett, who was then the manager of the Grand Theatre at Leeds. Almost by return of post he wrote to say that he had taken the Court Theatre in London, and would produce my play during the coming season. He was as good as his word, and thus commenced in earnest my career as a dramatic author, and my friendship and association with Wilson Barrett." Since 1879 Mr. Jones has, either singly or in collaboration, written many plays: "An Old Master," for the Princess's, in 1880; "His Wife," acted at Sadler's Wells in the year following; "A Bed of Roses," produced at the Globe in January, 1882; "The Silver King," brought out at the Princess's in November of the same year; in 1884, "Breaking a Butterfly" at the Prince's Theatre, "Chatterton" at the Princess's, and "Saints and Sinners" at the Vaudeville quickly followed each other; August, 1885, saw "Hoodman Blind," and February last "The Lord Harry," both represented at the Princess's Theatre. Christmas next will see two more of Mr. Jones's plays before the public—a romantic melodrama, with Mr. Charles Warner as the hero, at the Princess's, and a comedy at the Vaudeville. It is the aim of Mr. Henry A. Jones, and rightly so, to portray English life in his plays. To do this as faithfully as may be is his object, and it has, so far, been generally successfully accomplished. In addition to a vast skill in drawing character, he has an ability to write strong, vigorous dialogue, too seldom, alas! heard in modern plays.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from July 20 to August 23, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

London:

July 23 "Knight Against Rock," new and original comedy, in three acts, by Owen Dove and J. G. Lefebre. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)

,, 29 "The Jilt," comedy, in five acts, by Dion Boucicault. Prince's Theatre. (First performance in London.)

Aug. 16 "Life or Death," drama, in five acts, adapted by Frank Harvey. Grand Theatre.

,, 23 "With the Colours; or, A Black Seal," new and original drama, by Elliot Galer and James Mew. Grand Theatre. (First time in London. Previously produced at Leicester on August 16).

Provinces:

Aug. 2 "Out for the Day," farce, in three acts, by W. E. Morton. New Theatre, Oxford.

,, 2 "No Rose Without a Thorn," comedy, in one act, by Mark Melford. Theatre Royal, Nottingham.

,, 6 "A Child of Chance," adaptation, by W. Howell Poole, of Ouida's "Tricotrin." Court Theatre, Liverpool.

,, 6 "The Grand Duke," extravaganza, by George Lash Gordon, music by John Gregory. Her Majesty's Theatre, Dundee.

,, 9 "Gone Away," new and original comedy, by Edward Righton and Dalton Stone. Comedy Theatre, Manchester.

,, 11 "Vanity," drama, in four acts, adapted by Justin McCarthy from the French of Sardou. Theatre Royal, Plymouth.

,, 16 "With the Colours." Opera House, Leicester. (See London, August 23).

,, 16 "Sweet Innisfail," drama, in four acts, by Walter Reynolds. Queen's Theatre, Manchester.

,, 23 "My Courier," farcical comedy, in four acts, adapted from the German. Comedy Theatre, Manchester.

Paris:

July 30* "Le Mari à la Campagne," comedy in four, acts, by Bayard. Comédie Française.

Aug. 2* "La Petite Fadette," comic opera, in three acts and five tableaux; words by Georges Sand; music by M. Theophile Semet. Château d'Eau.

,, 12* "Les Dangers de l'Ivresse," drama, in five acts, by M. Latouche. Belleville.

,, 13 "Torquemada," comic opera, in one act; words by M. Desnar; music by M. Porcher. Château d'Eau.

,, 13 "La Servante de Ramponneau," comic opera, in two acts; words by M. Rodenbourg; music by M. Carman. Château d'Eau.

,, 13* "La Poupée du Nurembourg," comic opera in one act; words by MM. De Leuven and De Beauplan; music by M. Adolphe Adam. Château d'Eau.

,, 19* "Luther de Cremone," one-act comedy in verse, by M. François Coppée. Comédie Française.

,, 21* "L'Avare," Molière's five-act comedy. Comédie Française.

THE THEATRE.

A Penny Plain: Twopence Coloured.

By Godfrey Turner.

COLLECTORS know the difficulties which they have to encounter, and which vary in accordance with the nature of such things as they are accustomed to collect. For example, snuff-boxes, pipes, miniatures, swords, fans, rat-tail spoons, Paul Lamerie tankards, and console clocks of the best periods of French manufacture are hard to come by; but the obstacles to their acquisition are simple enough. All these things really are treasures, and in that word lies the sufficient explanation of their rarity. Old plate was valuable even when it was new plate, and so it had a good chance of being preserved, even through troublous times, when the cups and goblets on many a great man's buffet went to the melting-pot. The labour of collecting is most complicated where the objects have little or no intrinsic value, or where common and careless use has diminished the likelihood of their survival. Old Delf ware, a century ago or less, was looked on with contempt; nor was it probable that "the cat's dining-dish" would be carefully preserved for an age of nicer artistic valuation. Paste buckles, being set in silver, stood a better chance of being handed down through half-a-dozen generations; but where are the hats or shoes in which they were sometime worn? I have heard that one student of old habits and customs, Mr. Joseph Grego, has, with diligent pains and labour, succeeded in forming a fairly good historical collection of shoes and sandals; but imagine the difficulty! Again, it would be a far harder task to collect a score of tinder-boxes, such as were in use fifty years ago, with their proper supply of flint, steel, tinder, and matches, than to make up a sideboard-full of Queen Anne candlesticks. When we come to horn-books,

primers, nursery-tales, and such destructible possessions of antiquated youth, we approach a class of subjects likely to daunt the spirit of the boldest collector.

Something akin to nursery literature of a past generation are those "characters" published, for the delectation of our little fathers and grandfathers, by Mr. West. How ignorantly have they been depreciated! How unjust, how foolish has been the scorn heaped upon that phrase, "A penny plain: twopence coloured"! I shall undertake to show, even by the adoption of a pretty high standard, that a collection of "West's Theatrical Portraits," would be not only curious in the dilettante sense, but worthy the critical heed of the artist and the amateur. To begin —there is the shop-advertisement, not the frontispiece, be it observed, for it contains the significant words, "Sold Here," which refers to the many sheets of scenes and characters that erst were supplied across the counters of dingy but delightful shops in Drury Lane. This shop-advertisement, never printed in any great number, is now exceedingly scarce. I have a copy before me, as indeed I am writing from a renewed acquaintance with the etchings, plain and coloured, that gave me so many happy hours when I was a boy. It is pleasant to see that all was not illusion; that there was true merit in what I admired; nay that, with all my love of these staring, exaggerated, conventional designs, I did not see half, nor a fiftieth part of half, their true artistic skill.

Who, does the reader suppose, drew that same shop-advertisement of "West's Theatrical Portraits"? I am able to tell him with positive certainty. It was William Blake. A pair of Punchinellos are the supporters of a grotesque device on which the title is emblazoned, and over each of the drolls is a floating fairy-figure, touched with a dexterous and easy but by no means careless grace. In the background, half-hidden, is Harlequin, in Harlequin's most striking and characteristic attitude. Blake was one of West's most industrious limners. The monogram combining the two letters, W.B., appears again and again, on these penny sheets, that were twopence when coloured. But the mannerism of Blake is almost a sufficient signature; for remember, it was a signature in spite of itself, and was not likely to be obtruded. West's purpose was to subdue all these designs to one style, an ideal of his own. "*West inv.*" is inscribed on the same plate, the shop-advertisement, with Blake's convoluted "W.B." The enterprising pub-

lisher was evidently a man who knew what he meant. Round him were gathered all the best workmen he could find ready to do his bidding. Among them I have been able to identify hands as diverse—yet all brought as near as possible to one complexion of labour—as Flaxman, George and Robert Cruikshank, Finden, and the Heaths. It was William Heath who chiefly did the colouring, though he etched many of the figures; for instance, Miss Romer as Columbine is his, and, I think, one of his very best. In a simpler, and, if you please, a rougher way, it is not unworthy the flattering skill that made the fame and fortune of "Heath's Book of Beauty." Heath was the preceptor of Robert Nicholson, from whom in turn my friend, Edward Draper, derived the sure methodical touch, in humorous drawing, which he adds to natural insight and quick perception of facial character. I like to trace this genealogy of art back to the powerful if sometimes coarse and exaggerated figures and faces on West's theatrical sheets. In odd relationship thereto, I can scarce repress a smile when I think that Nicholson tried to teach Count D'Orsay drawing, and coached that good-natured cynic and amiable pretender to artistic ability in the design of certain statuettes, notably, the little bronze figure of Louis Napoleon, the model for which was made at Gore House. I have in my possession the original sketch in pencil even now. It is the unmistakable work of Nicholson, with all that artist's anatomical knowledge, and without a line that D'Orsay could for his life have drawn.

And now a word or two about the coloured characters. I appeal to every old boy who has painted and tinselled West's theatrical portraits, in the times of a school-day art now lost, to say truly whether he has not been overcome with despair of ever rivalling, by help of his sixpenny paint-box, the "professional" tone and brilliancy of the sheets that he bought ready coloured. He knew not the trick of it. They were sadly wanting in *nuance*, and even to his eye they may have had a flaring look. But for all that, their fascination was irresistible, and the boy need have felt no misgiving of his proneness to acknowledge the charm. Of a truth, the artists were unembarrassed by any refinements of theory such as influence the "Michael-Angelo-for-the-Million" school. West's workmen took the readiest means of pleasing the school-boy taste; and while it was not their vaunted purpose to elevate that taste, they did nothing, I am sure, to degrade it. One favourite colour

used by William Heath was carmine, which the boys were never able to get. To heighten its brilliancy, he mixed it well with sugar, and thus prepared it was kept in a bottle. This and a blue, which to the educated eye in these æsthetic days may seem far too Reckitty, but which, nevertheless, is true Navy blue, and stands in admirable relation to black, are as vivid to-day as when they were first laid on in 1815, or from that to 1835, when tinselling was at its height. Gamboge was also used, and this too was enriched with sugar, which gave it a fat unctuous depth very telling in shades of gold. In the use of all these colours, and of an inimitably ripe russet brown, generally applied to the coats of elderly or rustic persons, and the boots of unprincipled and bloodthirsty men, certain conventional and oft-repeated effects were produced which never palled. It was the nice apposition, like the seasoning of the kitten-pies mentioned by Mr. Samuel Weller, that "did it." There was little or no attempt at gradations, the black shadowing of the print, through the colour, serving for the indications of folds or rounded shapes and surfaces. In fact, nothing was attempted beyond the reach of ready means. Ducrow as St. George, Yates as the Red Rover, T. P. Cooke as Fid in the same piece, Martin the lion tamer, who preceded Van Amburgh by many years, these are all drawn on a large scale, and boldly coloured by Heath.

If these and smaller drawings are looked at, down to the little two-inch figures, meant to be cut out, stiffened on cardboard, and set on slides for the stages of toy theatres, a curious mingling of melodramatic exaggeration and historical accuracy will be perceived. For instance, in the "Rob Roy" sheets, where some of the portraits are wonderfully animated and characteristic in their likeness and dramatic expression, there are allusions playful or grim, or both, to circumstances such as are mentioned in the notes of Sir Walter Scott; and in some fighting groups, where English soldiers with the musket and bayonet, are opposed at close quarters, as at Culloden, to Highlanders with the claymore and targe, a not too well-known historical fact is directly and vigorously depicted. At first, the bayonet thrust being directed full at the swordsman, the latter met it with his targe, and dealt the swashing downward cut, so that for a time the Southerner had the worst of it. Afterwards the men were taught to depend each on his next comrade, who would divert the guard of the Highlander, while the

bayonet-prod was delivered under the targe ; and this is precisely what is being done in West's hand-to-hand engagements. I am not forgetful of the fact that George Cruikshank, while admitting that he did a few things for West, spoke of them as casual and unfrequent ; but receipts with his signature, which were sold as curious autographs even in his life time, show that his work for West was regular and continuous for a period of at least two years. Once at least, and I know not how often the incident was repeated. he etched, in his rapid, vigorous manner, two plates, or sheets of characters, in one day. West paid his artists, all round, the sum of two pounds for each plate, if approved. This was the price received by Blake, Flaxman, and the rest. In 1824 a set of the characters in "The Miller and his Men" appeared in West's series ; and it was so poor a performance that we need not wonder to see it followed next year by a new and vastly more spirited set. Evidently, West had thought it worth while to expend as much money over again as he had paid for the first, and to secure, this time, the aid of George Cruikshank. The uncoloured sheets, full of little figures, are, I confess, my favourites. Nothing could be better of its kind than the story of "The Bottle Imp," told in two plates. The likeness of Oxberry, the original Willibald, a part in which he was succeeded by Keeley, is a most humorous piece of suggested portraiture. Then there are the crowds of two-inch characters in "The Children of the Mist" and "Timour the Tartar," all admirable. I do not say that these, or "The Bottle Imp" characters, are George Cruikshank's work ; indeed, I know that "Timour the Tartar" was Heath's. But by whomsoever these little figures were etched, whether Flaxman, Blake, Finden, either of the Heaths, or Crowquill—an elder artist, so styled, than the Mr. Forrester, who drew for Hone and Chambers, and who had nothing whatever to do with West or his theatrical portraits —I say, they are most conscientious bits of work. Indeed, West took care they should be as good as the artists could make them. He insisted that everything should be drawn "from the front," and hence the reality of all the figures, even in their theatrical exaggeration. I recognise in many of the personages, even where likeness was not strictly necessary, the faces of Oxberry, Wilkinson, Miss Boden, Jack Saunders, and ever so many more, I could only have seen as a child, permitted, all too soon, to go to the

play. Many of West's character-sheets were published years before I was born. But others belonged to my time, and I am glad now that I loved them.

There came, anon, one Skelt, whose theatrical sheets were sold at a lower price than West's—a halfpenny, instead of a penny. I know not whether this "competition," as it is called, was the cause of languishing and final cessation of West's designs; but they did languish and they did cease. I have called them etchings, a term which will perhaps be questioned nowadays; but etchings they were. Art in all its manifestations is worshipped by the English people; but it is worshipped more or less blindly, as by a race that worships some hazy idea beyond its reach, beyond its comprehension even. What we do mainly see, and touch, and comprehend in works of art is the fact that they are commercially expensive; or we think it "educational" to fabricate by hundreds of thousands at a price so marvellously cheap as to make them worthless, mechanical copies of original works. The "penny plain and twopence coloured" prints by West, which had original merit and copied or imitated nothing, have been ignorantly despised.

German Odds and Ends.

By William Beatty-Kingston.

Of all the cities in the Fatherland Hamburg is the one in which an unprejudiced Englishman—if such a being exist—finds the least difficulty in making himself at home. Not that it resembles any English town in its outward and visible features, or in the habits and demeanour of its denizens. On the contrary, it is German to the backbone, and has as little in common with a British commercial emporium or provincial capital as Würzburg or Nürnberg itself. It is palatial, not in a stately, but in a comfortable way; and no English city is palatial, because every Englishman who can afford it likes to have a house to himself—a predilection which naturally dwarfs our domestic architecture, and expresses itself concretely in rows of smallish dwellings, generally uniform in pattern and frequently ignominious in style. Germans, on the other hand, however easy their circumstances, high their birth, or distinguished their social station, entertain no objection whatsoever to living in flats; and the fact that the abiding of a dozen families or more under the roof that covers their own heads does not cause them a single pang enables builders and architects to erect mansions on a really grand scale, as far as mere dimensions are concerned, and to indulge in variety of design, magnificence of *ensemble*, and elegance of ornamental detail. Palaces combining all these characteristics abound in Hamburg—edifices no less imposing in appearance than the new hotels in Northumberland Avenue, and superbly decorative. The contrast between these gorgeous buildings and the quaint old gabled houses that are still to be seen here and there in the central streets of the great Free Town is very striking and curious. Sixteenth-century dwellings, three and four storeys high, apparently built of lath and plaster, often lopsided and seemingly on the point of collapsing, stand side by side with mighty erections of fair white stone, adorned with fine sculptures, frescoes, and mosaics, which look solid enough to last

as long as the Pyramids. It is not only, however, in the matter of its public and domestic architecture that Hamburg may justly claim a foremost place amongst the more "advanced" cities of New Germany. Its locomotive facilities—from which, however, cabs must be excluded, as the Hamburg fiacre is the most inefficient and contemptible vehicle of its class in Europe—have been intelligently developed until they leave little room for improvement, and may fearlessly challenge criticism. The whole city and its enormous suburbs are fitted out with an elaborate network of tramcar lines that enable the Hamburger or the stranger within his gates to transport himself from well nigh any given point to any other, within a four-mile radius, swiftly and smoothly for the sum of one penny. That is all he need pay to travel from the Bourse (Hamburg's social as well as commercial centre, the daily rendezvous of doctors, lawyers, and artists, as of merchants, bankers, and brokers) to St. Pauli or Altona; whilst a perky little fleet of *bateaux-mouches* is at his disposal from 6 a.m. to midnight to convey him from the Jungfernstieg to any of the gay leafy *Vorstaedte* that fringe the glorious Alster with luxurious villas, green lawns, umbrageous copses, and gardens glowing with all the colours of the rainbow. The tiny pyroscaphes dart from landing-stage to landing-stage with the velocity of dragonflies, and daily carry thousands of well-to-do citizens backwards and forwards between their offices and the verdant retreats in which the Hamburg stock-jobber and commission-agent love to dwell. No city with which I am acquainted, save the *chef-lieu* of the Hanseatic League, can boast of so magnificent a sheet of water as the stately sparkling Alster, which looks like a vast lake, but in reality is a river cunningly embasined and regulated, so that its surface-level never varies more than an inch or two within the four-and-twenty hours.

Hamburg, I am bound to say, has its drawbacks as well as its advantages. In the first place, the paving of its roadways is for the most part as bad as that of Berlin used to be twenty years ago, being composed of jagged and vociferous stones that, under the pressure of an enormous wheeled traffic, murder sleep quite as effectually as though they were so many petrified Thanes of Cawdor. Whilst I inhabited a third-floor "front" overlooking the Jungfernstieg—that is to say, throughout a week of weather that would have done credit to the Soudan in high summer-tide—

my slumbers were continually broken, night after night, by the strident rattle given out by the street under my windows; until one morning, having completely lost my appetite and spirits, and being in a condition of nervousness that threatened me with dementia, I packed my portmanteau and fled to Berlin, wildly resolved to sleep or perish in the attempt. Again, Hamburg is one of those unfortunate places in which it is uncommonly difficult to dine. It only possesses one good restaurant—Pfordte's—at which the food is of excellent quality and artistically prepared, whilst the wines—perhaps the most comprehensive collection of fine vintages and rare brands to be found in any European hostelry, including the "Four Seasons" at Munich—are one and all supernacular. But Pfordte's is very dear; as dear as Bignon's in Paris; far dearer than any London or Vienna dining-room; and one who is poor though honest finds himself called upon to think twice before entering its comfortable precincts, unless at the solicitation of some wealthy and hospitable acquaintance. The cost of "a little dinner" at Pfordte's, translated into British currency, means five-and-twenty shillings—a mere bagatelle to a magnate of the Hansa, who has inherited an unknown number of millions from his slave-dealing or smuggling ancestors, or haply has built up a colossal fortune upon the broad and solid basis of wholesale adulteration; but a prohibitive outlay to a holiday-making London journalist, endowed with a month's leave and half-a-dozen five-pound notes wherewith to defray his expenses during that blissful interval of rest and recreation. And yet, if a tourist of this class, afflicted with an educated palate and a healthily recurrent hunger, does not dine at Pfordte's in Hamburg, he must make up his mind to batten upon inferior food, and to shudder over caricatures of wine in any one of the innumerable *gargottes* that prosper on the banks of the Alster, each of these establishments being as barbarous as another. I was invited the other day to dine with a local "personage" at a restaurant known as Ehmke's, of considerable but wholly undeserved renown. The dinner, a simple one of three courses, took an hour and forty minutes to serve; soup, consisting of dirty, warm water, and shiny but unsavoury grease; stale turbot, boiled to rags, and garnished by small potatoes resembling spheres of highly-polished Dutch cheese; and, finally, a brace of over-roasted partridges, served with cranberry jam, cucumber salad, and stewed plums. Of the three bottles of Rhine wine successively

supplied to us the first was vehemently corked, the second unreasonably acid, and the third curiously mawkish. At the close of this noisome repast we quitted Herr Ehmke's establishment hungry and athirst, invoking maledictions on his head, and vowing that nevermore would we cross his inhospitable threshold.

During a brief visit which I paid to Hamburg four years ago I had occasion to call attention to the extraordinarily high quality of the operatic performances at the Stadt Theater, then supported by the strongest company of vocal and dramatic artists in Germany —a company the perfect efficiency of which had taken musical London by surprise at Drury Lane when the "Meistersinger" and "Tristan and Isolde" were so superbly executed under the direction of Hans Richter—alas! with such infelicitous pecuniary results. Since that time, I regret to say, the Stadt Theater has lost several of its finest singers and actors; and, but for its admirable orchestra, still led by the gifted and genial Franz Sucher, could scarcely claim to rank among the leading opera houses of the Fatherland. True, it still possesses an inimitable dramatic *prima donna* in the person of Rosa Sucher, the first of living Wagnerian heroines, whose splendid presence, glorious voice, and faultless intonation never fail to throng the great Hamburg house whenever her name figures in the bill; but Winkelmann has migrated to Vienna; Gura, the unrivalled "Hans Sachs" and "Hollaender," is at Munich; Peschka-Leutner, Neubauer, and several other stars of the constellation that shone so brightly during the season of 1882 now sparkle in other theatrical firmaments, and have been replaced in Hamburg by luminaries of a far less lambent lustre. One good recruit, a Fräulein Klaffsky, has joined the Pollini colours; but Weltlinger, the "heroic tenor" who has succeeded Winkelmann, is an almost inconceivably bad singer and actor, and Boetel, the quality of whose upper register really leaves nothing to be desired, does not appear to be over-burdened with either musical or dramatic intelligence. It is fortunate for the lessee of the Stadt Theater—who, by the way, practically monopolises the theatrical business of Hamburg, having recently taken possession of the Thalia as well as of the pretty house in Altona—that he has been able to retain the inestimable services of Kapellmeister Sucher, whom Hans Richter has often designated to me as the first orchestral conductor in Germany. Such a rendering of the "Tannhäuser" overture as I heard the other night under his

leadership it has never been my good fortune to listen to at Vienna, Berlin, Munich, or Dresden; it was simply sublime. Director Pollini is, as of old, the busiest of men, but teeming with genial courtesy and thoughtful hospitality towards stray musicians and men of letters from abroad, who may happen to visit the scene of his labours and successes. It has always been an insoluble problem to me how, with three theatrical companies to manage, he finds time to attend to his foreign visitors—to return their calls, entertain them at luncheon and dinner-parties, devise countless schemes for their amusement—in short, overwhelm them with social civilities and recreative facilities in such sort as almost to embarrass them with a sense of excessive obligation. Yet all this he contrives to do, without in the least foregoing the rigorous supervision of his artists and *employés* that has solidly established his reputation throughout Germany as the strictest and most formidable theatrical manager of this or any other period.

When I arrived at Berlin, on the occasion of my precipitate flight from the terrors of the Hamburg pavement, I could scarcely believe my eyes, so suprising is the transformation undergone by the German capital since I quitted it towards the close of the year 1878, memorable in Prussian annals for the two successive attempts on the life of the venerable Emperor, perpetrated by Hoedel and Nobiling, and for the establishment of the "lesser state of siege," which has been maintained in Berlin thenceforth without intermission up to the present time. No foreigner entering Berlin, however, by rail or road nowadays could possibly realise the fact that any sort of *Belagerungszustand*, however limited and mild, obtains within the precincts of Ursa Minor; for no questions are asked of the traveller by any person dressed in a little brief authority; he is not requested to show his passport, or to state whence he is come, or whither he proposes to go; in short, he is as free as a street sparrow to alight wherever he listeth, and, moreover, is treated by everybody in uniform with a vast deal more politeness and consideration than are usually accorded to that pert and erratic fowl even by members of the *Thierschutzverein*, None of the amazing changes for the better that have been effected in Berlin within the last decade has struck me with greater surprise and gratification than the improvement which has accrued in the manners and demeanour of all those functionaries with whom everybody is more or less brought into immediate contact in the

course of everyday out-of-door life, such as railway officials, policemen, telegraph clerks, cabmen, and commissionaires. During my eight years' residence on the left bank of the Spree, I found these people always stiff, frequently disagreeable, and sometimes rude. Now—as far, at least, as my recent experiences of them have gone—they are pliant, pleasant, and studiously courteous. The Italian "agent of security" himself is not more bland and deferential in his bearing towards the public than is the Berliner *Schutzmann* of 1886; and as for the *Droschkenkutscher*, whose incivility used to be proverbial—who was wont, in my time, to receive his instructions with a surly sniff, and pocket his *trinkgeld* with an offensive grunt—he has been transmogrified by some potent spell into an attentive, smiling charioteer, eager to place his local information at the disposal of his fare, towards whom he observes an attitude that is thoroughly respectful, without being servile. The animal he drives, too, is an unquestionable horse—not a doubtful frame, as formerly; and his vehicle is a light but strong victoria, very smart and neatly finished, which rolls swiftly and easily over the smooth asphalt of Berlin's magnificent streets. It is in these latter, of course, that the stupendous development of Berlin, in regard to wealth, taste, and public spirit, under the Empire is most conspicuously manifest. The German capital—in its exclusively Prussian state of being one of the ugliest, worst-paved, and drained, unhealthiest towns in Europe—is become a City of Palaces, luxuriously paved and lighted, swept as clean as a new pin, absolutely free from evil odours; a brilliant exemplar of civilisation, order, and intelligent administration. Some of its chief thoroughfares are illuminated after dark with electric light; it owns the finest system of urban railways (all above ground) that has ever come under my notice, as well as tramway lines in great profusion; its Plätze are tastefully adorned with fountains, statues and gay flowerbeds framed in emerald turf; its hotels, especially the new Central and Continental, are colossal edifices of remarkable architectural beauty, abounding in every convenience and comfort suggested by latter-day ingenuity; in short, Berlin is in all respects worthy of the high station it holds among modern cities as the capital of an empire peopled by the most powerful, intelligent, and highly educated nation of Continental Europe.

I hear, however, from competent authorities that, in one regard

of no inconsiderable moment, Berlin has distinctly deteriorated within the past eight years. The glory of the Royal Opera House is departed, and its performances, which used to be characterised by a high standard of all-round efficiency, are said to be lamentably unequal. Where Lucca, Mallinger, and Lily Lehmann formerly reigned, Lola Beeth and Sachse-Hofmeister rule the roast; Ernst is a feeble substitute for Albert Niemann, who seldom sings save in the purely declamatory *rôles* of Wagnerian opera; Frau von Voggenhuber's once flawless voice reveals alarming signs of wear and tear; the orchestra is not what it was in the days of Eckart, and there are more grandmothers than granddaughters in the *corps de ballet.* Fricke, the genial Falstaff and impressive Marcel, has retired from the stage on a pension splendidly earned by fifty years' uninterrupted service to the king and the public; Franz Diener is dead, Grossi is married, and several excellent subordinate artistes have "bettered themselves," to the manifest disadvantage of the operatic *ensemble,* for which Herr von Huelsen is responsible. Nor is operetta, I am assured, as well sustained in the minor theatres of Berlin as it was of yore. By the way, the lighter lyric drama in this city has recently sustained a grievous loss through the suicide of its brightest ornament, Fräulein Erdösy, who shot herself in the Thiergarten a few days ago. The story of the sorrow that drove her to desperation is a very sad one. It appears that she was a girl of irreproachable conduct, who had for some years past earned a large salary, out of which she had saved up and profitably invested no smaller a sum than four thousand pounds. Being beautiful and accomplished, as well as possessed of a comfortable competence, she was repeatedly sought in marriage by gentlemen of good birth and position; and of her many suitors the one fortunate enough to secure her affection was a Count von Strachwitz, according to one account that has reached me; according to another, a certain Herr von Wernigerode. To whichever of these "cavaliers" was really the man of her choice she was formally betrothed, and had arranged to espouse him on the termination of her Berlin engagement, when she intended to give up her profession definitively. From a detailed statement which she addressed to the State Attorney of Berlin, and which reached him on the morning after her death, it has been gathered that, a short time ago, her *fiancé* conceived some wholly unfounded suspicion of her virtue, which he communicated

to her, intimating his intention to retract his plighted troth. She took his accusation so deeply to heart that, after revolving it in her mind for a few days, she resolved to put an end to a life which, blighted by a taint on her fair fame, she regarded as valueless. Accordingly, she drove out to the Thiergarten one night after the theatre, dismissed her fiacre, sat down on a bench in a retired portion of the park, and discharged a pistol into her right temple. The bullet passed through the upper part of her face, forcing the right eye out of its socket, traversing the nasal bone, and finally lodging in the left jaw. When she was found she was quite conscious and groaning piteously—so terribly disfigured as to be unrecognisable, but, in the opinion of the surgeons who examined her, not wounded to death. She died, however, early in the morning, and her last words were an agonised entreaty to those around her "not to save her." In the letter which she wrote to the Staatsanwalt she implored that official to give orders that her body should be subjected to a post-mortem examination, in order that her reputation might be cleared of the hideous imputation which had rendered existence intolerable to her. The fate of this lovely and gifted creature, who preferred a dreadful death to a life darkened by the shadow of dishonour, has stirred popular sympathy very strongly on behalf of the innocent victim of calumny, and has aroused general indignation against the man of little faith, who lent his ear to so vile a scandal concerning the woman he had sworn to love and protect. Whoever he may be, he will do wisely to vanish from Berlin for some time to come.

Schloss Diepensee.

"Requiescat in Pace!"

FRANZ LISZT.

Born October, 1811. Died July 31, 1886.

CALMLY he rests in that strange shadow-land,
Where never enter jarring sounds of strife,
To mar the concord of that peaceful life:
While round his grave all Europe, mourning, stands!

Passed from our midst is one more mighty name
Which linked the Present to that deathless Past,
When flowers of Music o'er the earth were cast,
Whose fragrance sweet lives in the breath of Fame.

At rest for ever are the wondrous hands,
Beneath whose magic touch sweet music thrilled,
And human hearts with echoes sweet were filled,
As though a seraph-strain swept through the lands!

Ah! and it seems to us but yesterday
That England bade him welcome to her shore;
Alas! her "Good-bye" was—"for evermore";
'Twixt him and Death's dim path but few steps lay.

Hid 'neath the waters of Time's mighty stream,
The courtly grace and noble face, alight
With Music's fire, have vanished from our sight;
Yet shall those mem'ries fade, as doth a dream?

Nay, but for evermore, while Music's reign
Doth sway triumphantly the hearts of men,
This name, inscribed with Honour's golden pen,
Shall gleam and sparkle high in Glory's fame!

And memories of many generous deeds
Bloom, with fair flow'rets, on his grave to-day—
Mem'ries of words which lit the toilsome way,
And shone as beacon-lights in time of need.

And so we leave him, while above his head
The pure bird-carols form a requiem sweet
To one who laid his life at Music's feet;
Aye, "Rest in Peace"! oh, loved and honoured dead!

Effie May Ayling.

First Appearances.

KEAN, MACREADY, MISS O'NEILL.

By Percy Fitzgerald.

THE stage can show many strange, irregular figures, who seem to have belonged, at one time or another, to Scarron's odd troupe. Among all our English players, the most extraordinary career is surely that of Edmund Kean; and, could it be related with a plain, brutal candour, would offer the most startling combination of genius and disorder. In many points, in his alternate moods of sottishness and electrifying exhibitions of art, he suggests Frédéric Lemaître. In an auctioneer's room catalogue many years ago—things which often reveal the secrets of their prison house—were printed a number of the most extraordinary letters, illustrating his wild and reckless nature. Kean was one of those who had been literally reared on the stage. He played child parts; performed the young Arthur to Mrs. Siddons's Constance; had starved as a stroller; then "joined the Circuits," and gave variety entertainments of his own. Like Mrs. Siddons, he obtained a London engagement for a season, and had virtually failed from being put into unsuitable parts. Before me now lies open the bill of these first performances:—

Theatre Royal, Haymarket.
This evening, Wednesday, July 30th, 1806,
will be presented a Farce, in two acts,
called:

F O R T U N E ' S F R O L I C K.

Robin Roughhead, Mr. Mathews.
Snacks, Mr. Hatton. Frank, Mr. Whitfield.
Clown, Mr. Kean. Rattle, Mr. Palmer, Jun.
Servant, Mr. Johnson. Countryman, Mr. Parsloe.
Margery, Mrs. Powell. Miss Nancy, Mrs. Mathews.
Dolly, Mrs. Gibbs.

This was followed by two other pieces—"Five Miles Off" and

"The Agreeable Surprise." In all three the Mathews', husband and wife, had parts; but the obscure Kean had to content himself with the single one of the "clown" in the first.

Some years went by, during which the future tragedian, having to return to "the country," drudged on with little recognition. He gradually, however, began to make some impression; his "tempestuous" style made him acceptable, and soon was entrusted with the leading "round" of characters.

The unpretending town of Dorchester was destined to be the place where this great tragedian was "discovered." He had accepted an offer from Elliston to play at one of the London minor theatres, but, by a happy chance, Dr. Drury, of Eton, who had formed a favourable opinion of him when a lad, chanced to see him play, and recommended him to Drury Lane, on which a commissioner, Mr. Arnold, was despatched to report on his merits, just as Mr. Bate had been empowered by Garrick. The eventful night of trial was November 14, 1813, and the play was "The Mountaineers."

"When the curtain drew up," Kean tells us, "I saw a wretched house; a few people in the pit and gallery and three persons in the boxes showed the quality of attraction we possessed. In the stage box, however, there was a gentleman who appeared to understand acting; he was very attentive to the performance. Seeing this, I was determined to play my best. The strange man did not applaud, but his looks told me that he was pleased. After the play, I went to my dressing-room *under the stage*" (how significant this *locale!*) "to change my dress for the savage (Kanko, a character in a pantomime), so that I could hear every word that was said overhead. I heard the gentleman of the stage box ask the manager the name of the performer who played Octavian.

"'Oh,' answered Lee, 'his name is Kean—a wonderful clever fellow.' (This would seem to show that there was no bill for the night.)

"'Indeed,' said the gentleman, 'he is very clever, but he is very small.'

"'His mind is large,' said Lee; 'so no matter for his height.'

"By this time I was dressed for the savage, so I mounted the stage. The gentleman bowed to me, and complimented me slightly on my playing.

"'Well,' he said, 'will you breakfast with me to-morrow? I

shall be glad to have some conversation with you. My name is Arnold. *I am the manager of Drury Lane Theatre!'*

"I staggered as if I had been shot. My acting as the savage was done for. I, however, stumbled through the part."

His favourite child, Howard, was at the time suffering from water on the brain, and in a dangerous way, and a glance at it destroyed his happiness. He rallied with the speech, "if Howard gets well, we shall all be happy yet."

This apparition of "a London manager in the boxes" used to flutter the hearts of the companies on the circuit, for it led to the ardently-desired London engagement. Who knew this so well, or has touched it so admirably, as Dickens in his vivacious sketch of such a scene?

At the interview with Arnold the matter was arranged, and he was engaged. But his son now died. His grief was such that he did not care for the brilliant opening. "The joy I felt," he wrote to the manager, "three days since at the flattering prospects of future prosperity is now obliterated by the unexpected loss of my child. Howard, sir, died on Monday morning last. This heartrending event must delay me longer in Dorchester than I intended. Immediately I reach London, I will again, I hope, with more fortitude address you."

There was something in the new actor that was not likely to aid the efforts of a candidate. He was defiant, suspicious, jealously independent, very poor, almost to squalor, while his very appearance, mean and short to a degree, was against him. When the members of the committee saw the listless, shabby postulant, they repented of their bargain, and at one of their meetings severely rebuked their manager for his precipitancy. When it was discovered that he had actually agreed with another, this excuse was seized on, and he was accused of double dealing. By desperate exertion he succeeded in getting released from his rash undertaking, and it was said Elliston was rather glad to be free. During this period of suspense, it is said, he was treated with indignity and insult by the committee and his fellow-actors. Rae, a mediocre performer who had known him in his strolling days, would not recognise him; "and the pale, restless little man," says Mr. Hawkins, "was daily to be found standing in the hall clothed in the frock with small capes," which concealed the

poverty of his attire. At the single rehearsal it was pronounced that it would be a certain failure. Everyone said "it wouldn't do." The stage manager was disgusted.

He remained at home, continues Mr. Hawkins, till six o'clock. Snatching up a bundle, he kissed his wife and infant son, and hurried to the theatre. With his well-worn boots soaked with mud and slush, he slunk in at the stage door as if desirous of escaping notice. The night, as it had been the whole day, was wet and miserable. He arrived soaked through, and crept to a dressing-room, which he had to share with others, and dressed himself, to the amusement and contempt of his fellows, who noted that he was putting on a black wig instead of the traditional red one. The stage manager, Raymond, saw it too, but said not a word, giving him up as hopeless.

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.
This present WEDNESDAY, January 26, 1814,
His Majesty's servants will perform SHAKESPEARE'S play of the
MERCHANT OF VENICE.
Duke of Venice, Mr. R. PHILLIPS.
Antonio, Mr. POWELL.
Bassanio, Mr. RAE.
Salanio, Mr. I. WALLACK. Salarino, Mr. CROOKE.
Gratiano, Mr. WRENCH.
Lorenzo, Mr. PHILIPPS.
With the songs, "*To Keep my Gentle Jersey*" (composed by Dr. ARNE), and "*Softly Rise, O Southern Breeze*" (by Dr. BOYCE).
Shylock, Mr. KEAN, from the Theatre Royal, Exeter
(*His first Appearance at this Theatre*).
Launcelot, Mr. OXBERRY.
Tubal, Mr. MADDOCKS. Balthazar, Mr. BUXTON.
Gobbo, Mr. WEWITZER.
Portia, Miss SMITH.
Nerissa, Mrs. HARLOWE.
Jessica, Mrs. BLAND.
Will be sung, "*Haste, Lorenzo*" (composed by Dr. ARNE).
In Act III. a Duett by Mrs. BLAND *and* Mr. PHILLIPS
(Composed by Mr. SHAW).
After which will be revived (First time these Nine Years) MURPHY'S Farce of the
APPRENTICE.
Wingale, Mr. GATTIE.
Dick, Mr. BANNISTER.
Gargle, Mr. PENSON.
Simon, Mr. OXBERRY.

Irishman, Mr. Fisher. Scotchman, Mr. Carr.
Porter, Mr. Buxton. Watchman, Mr. Chatterley.
Spouters, Messrs. Evans, West, &c.
Charlotte, Mrs. Orger.

The house was thin—boxes nearly empty, and about fifty people in the pit. The performance has often been described—how, almost on his first utterances, his friend, Dr. Drury, declared "he is safe"; and the great, encouraging burst of applause on the words: "I will *assume* I may!" which, as he himself said, gave him the assurance of success. "Then I knew I had them with me." By the end of the first act it was known in the green room that a great success was attained. The players began to gather round him and congratulate. But he shrank from them with a look. Later on, the theatre began to re-echo with shouts. "How the devil so few of them kicked up such a row," said a humorous actor, "was something marvellous." The stage manager, who had told him he would never do, that his readings would not go down, came obsequiously to offer him an orange. The manager who had contemptuously addressed him as "young man" came with some negus. As he passed to his dressing-room he was assured that he had made a great hit. His own well-remembered speech was, "The pit rose at me." Then through the wet and slush he rushed home, clasped his wife in his arms. Then followed the supper—the calm of triumph.

"Mary," he cried, "you shall ride in your carriage! Charley, my boy, you shall go to Eton!"

But he then thought of his other child, and the tears came into his eyes.

It has often been noted what an immense contribution to the English stage has been furnished from the sister isle. Of the three eminent performers whose *débuts* we are recounting, two were natives of Ireland, while Kean's mother was of Irish extraction. Macready's father was an obscure country manager, and, it would appear, somewhat eccentric. His son was one of those thoughtful, deliberate characters who follow the stage with a calm certainty of success, and have restraint enough to wait the favourable opportunity, when they are ready. It is often forgotten that an important element in the actor's success is the weighty influence of *character*. A great player—as we know from a con-

spicuous living instance—is almost as powerful and the interest felt in him as strong, off the boards, as when he is holding all spellbound by the enchantment of his art. There was a good deal in Macready that suggests Kemble.

He had gone through the usual preparation and training in the country; but his father did not approve of his finally adopting the stage as a profession, and there was a serious difference between them on this score. The great actor was indeed afflicted with a terrible temper, outbreaks of which he would bewail again and again, only, unhappily, to relapse. He offers, indeed, what is perhaps the only instance of an eminent tragedian beating his manager in his own theatre.

He obtained an offer of an engagement at Covent Garden in 1816—apparently without much difficulty, perhaps because he did not seek it too eagerly; but he confessed to himself later that he had been premature, and might have waited with advantage. There was really no place for him. Young held all the leading tragic characters as of right; to Charles Kemble belonged all the gallant parts. "I should have weighed all this before," he admits despondently, even after his great success; "I had made my venture too soon." And he saw clearly that he would have either to sink into despondency or dwindle into respectability—that is, into mediocre parts, or work his way up. How successfully he carried out the latter alternative is known to the world. The night fixed for his first appearance at Covent Garden was Sept. 16, 1816, and the play "The Distressed Mother." He records that a "special engagement" was made with a celebrated performer, so as to give him every advantage. This was Mrs. Glover. "The best comic actress on the stage," he tells us, sarcastically, was to play the weeping Andromache. The bill of the night was as follows:—

Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.
This present Monday, September 16, 1816,
Will be acted the Tragedy of
THE DISTRESSED MOTHER.
Pyrrhus by Mr. C. Kemble.
Orestes by Mr. Macready
(*From the Theatre Royal, Dublin*), being his first appearance in London.
Pylades by Mr. Abbott.
Phœnix by Mr. Chapman.
Officers, Messrs. W. Chapman, George, Godwin, Grant, Heath, &c.

Hermione by Mrs. Egerton.
Andromache by Mrs. Glover
(*Her first Appearance at this Theatre these ten years*).
Cleone by Miss Logan. Cephisa by Mrs. Sterling.
After which (3rd time) a New Ballet Divertissement called
THE SERAGLIO,
Which was repeated on Friday amidst the acclamations of a crowded house.
The Miss Dennetts, the Spanish Dancers, Mr. Noble and Miss Luppino each received the several tributes of applause in their several styles of dancing.

He himself tells us in an engaging way how he felt on this always trying occasion, and it is interesting to find that so many players have left us minute accounts of their feelings, hopes, and fears at these critical moments.

"Several times in my life," he says, "it has fallen to my lot to encounter a crisis of this sort, where all seemed at stake, and of them all this was one of the most formidable; but the day arrived, and the venture must be made. Unaccustomed to the size of these large theatres, it was with a feeling like dismay that I entered on the stage; but, to all appearance, I managed to keep under control the flutter of my spirits, went through my rehearsal, inspected my room, and gave all directions necessary. Every courtesy was shown to me, and, as an ordinary civility to a *débutant*, whatever orders or free admissions I might wish for my friends were liberally set at my disposal by the managers; but I had then no friends, not even an acquaintance that I could call upon. After my early dinner, I lay down, endeavouring to compose myself till the hour appointed for my setting out to the theatre. The hackney coach—a conveyance, happily, in the advance of civilisation, 'mingled with things o'erpast'—was called, and I can almost fancy in recollecting it that I feel every disquieting jolt of the rambling vehicle, as it slowly performed the office of a hurdle in carrying me to the place of execution. The silent process of dressing was only interrupted by the call-boy, Parsloe's voice, 'Overture on, sir!' which sent a chill to my heart. The official rap at the door soon followed, and the summons, 'Mr. Macready!' made me instantly rally all my energies, and with a firm step I went forward to my trial. But the appearance of resolute composure assumed by the player at this turning point of his life belies the internal struggles he endures. These eventful

trials in respect to the state of mind and body in which they are encountered so resemble each other that, one described, describes all. The same agitation and effort to master it; the dazzled vision; the short, quick breath; the dry palate, the throbbing of the heart—all, however painfully felt, must be disguised in the character the actor strives to place before his audience.

"Abbott, as Pylades, was waiting for me at the side scene; and, when the curtain had risen, grasping his hand almost convulsively, I dashed upon the stage, exclaiming, as in a transport of the highest joy, 'O Pylades! What's life without a friend?' The applause of welcome that greeted my entrance, always so liberally bestowed by a London public on any new performance, was all I could have desired; but it was not until the loud and long plaudits following the vehement burst of passion in the line, 'O, ye gods! give me Hermione, or let me die!' that I gained any degree of self-possession. As the play proceeded I became more and more animated under the conflicting emotions of the distracted lover, and at the close, as I sank, *furiis agitatus* Orestes, into the arms of Pylades, the prolonged cheers of the audience satisfied me of my success. Congratulations were profusely tendered me by the various members of the Covent Garden Company, who stopped me in passing from the stage to my dressing room; and when summoned to the manager's room, Mr. Harris, in his peculiar way, observed, 'Well, my boy, you have done capitally; and if you could carry a play along with such a cast, I don't know what you cannot do.'

"I was to dine with him the next day to settle further proceedings, and I returned to my lodgings in a state of mind like one not fully awake from a disturbing dream, grateful for my escape, yet almost questioning the reality of what had passed. Would not the sleep be sweet and sound after such a termination to such a period of excitement and solicitude? It would seem so; but the mind is not yet at ease; the fate of the adventure is not yet decided; there is yet wanting the confirmation of public approval, and many an hour of a wakeful night is spent in painful uncertainty of what may be the tone of the morning press. With feverish impatience I awaited the arrival of the daily paper."

All this is natural, affecting, and of much interest. Only a cultivated mind could have made this analysis of emotions, which is, moreover, written in a easy, and even finished style.

But when he came to read the criticisms his feelings must have been of a mixed character. The "Times" held that he had "a certain amount of ability, but did not conceive it sufficient to shake Young, or much to intimidate Charles Kemble. They thought that he was a man of clever conception, of much energy, and some skill." The "Globe" indulged in a rather grotesque style of criticism:—"We think Macready requires features of a more prominent and strongly marked description than those which he possesses. When they marked the flashing of his eyes in the paroxysms of passion, our attention is withdrawn from *the flatness of the features* they irradiate."

Here was the fatal blemish. He was naturally plain, if not ugly. It was good-naturedly repeated to him that "some one in the boxes was heard to say 'I'm told he is a capital actor, *but a devilish ugly fellow*. They say he is an ugly likeness of Liston';" while Kemble, taking a pinch of snuff, was reported to have exclaimed to his brother, "O Charles! *con quel viso!*" The newspapers dwelt on the same imperfection, and one said rudely, "*Mr. Macready is the plainest and most awkwardly-made actor that ever trod the stage.*" This was not encouraging. But he triumphed over all obstacles —the ugly features included—and, after alternate failures and successes, retired with an independence—always a fair test of character and ability.

Readers and admirers of Mr. Thackeray's "Pendennis" perhaps relish most what is one of the most effectual and well-drawn characters in the whole—viz., Captain Costigan—father of "The Fotheringay." This amusing yet odious figure, however, will be appreciated by the Irish, who admit with astonishment the knowledge of delicate peculiarities and native touchings, which seem difficult if not impossible for an Englishman to note. It is well known that these two characters were drawn from Miss O'Neill, the famous actress, and her father. He may have met the worthy father, and heard him talk of "me daughter" and "the hundrer pounds" during the years between 1816 and 1820, when she flourished, for he was then just come upon town. It is another question as to the delicacy or taste of his proceeding, for Miss O'Neill was alive when the uncomplimentary portraits were published. It was said that O'Neill *père* and the family of brothers and sisters held firm by their sister, the one gifted member of the family, and that she,

good-naturedly, stipulated in her success that something must be done for them—just as Mr. Crummles declared, if the Phenomenon were engaged, her family must be also engaged.

How like he was to the Captain some touches which Mr. Clark Russell has furnished will show. If any member of his company disappointed him, O'Neill had one speech—"Confusion burst his skull, a blackguard! What will I do? Here, give me a greatcoat, and I'll double his part with my own." If the Ghost in Hamlet complained to Mr. O'Neill of the lack of armour in the wardrobe, the manager would shrug up his shoulders, and after a pause exclaim, "Oh, bother! sure if ye'll put on a greatcoat ye'll do very well." Once proceeding by a barge along a small river, the captain and O'Neill quarrelled, and in the scuffle O'Neill was knocked overboard. He swam to shore, and called out, "Confusion burst your soul! I suppose you thought I couldn't swim." A knot of novices once joined Mr. O'Neill, and having played some time without receiving their pay, they resolved to take proceedings against him. He met the charge with a counter-claim against them for a considerable sum due to him by them for spoiling all the plays and farces they appeared in.

The person who originally recognised her talent was Charles Mathews the elder. He was playing in the North of Ireland, at some obscure theatre, when he was much struck by her performance of Cowslip, and warmly recommended her to Harris, the Dublin manager, who engaged her. Strange to say, he seemed to think her gift was comedy.

It was in 1814 that she was discovered at Dublin and engaged for Covent Garden. "The Dog of Montargis; or, The Forest of Bondy," was then in high favour, and at the foot of the bill of Oct. 5, 1814, after describing the "enthusiastic bursts of approbation" which had greeted the dog, it was announced modestly that "On to-morrow will be performed Shakespeare's tragedy of 'Romeo and Juliet,' in which Miss O'Neill (of the Theatre Royal, Dublin), will make her first appearance in the character of Juliet. Romeo by Mr. Conway."

This Conway, a player of extraordinary height but otherwise pleasing, had gained the heart of old Mrs. Piozzi at Bath, and her letters to him were published some years afterwards to the amusement of the world. He had rather a sad career, struggling always

against jealousies, as he thought them, and against the ridicule directed against his lengthy person. He claimed to be connected with the Hertford family, and applied to the head of that noble house for recognition, which was refused. His sad story ended in suicide, he having thrown himself overboard when on his way to America.

The bill of the night was as follows:

Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.
This present Thursday, October 6, 1814,
Will be acted Shakespeare's Tragedy of

ROMEO AND JULIET.

Prince Escalus by Mr. Claremont. Paris by Mr. Hamerton.
Montague, Mr. Creswell. Capulet, Mr. Egerton.
Romeo by Mr. Conway.
Mercutio, Mr. Jones. Benvolio, Mr. Jefferies.
Tybalt, Mr. Barrymore. Friar Laurence, Mr. Murray.
Friar John, Mr. Howell. Apothecary, Mr. Treby.
Page, Master Chapman. Balthazar, Mr. Duruset.
Abram, Mr. Sarjant. Samson, Mr. Atkins. Gregory, Mr. Crumpton.
Peter, Mr. Simmons.
Lady Capulet by Mrs. Renaud.
Juliet by Miss O'Neill
(Of the *Theatre Royal, Dublin*), being her first appearance in London.
Nurse by Mrs. Davenport.
In Act I.,

A MASQUERADE AND DANCE,

INCIDENTAL TO THE PLAY.

In Act IV., The Funeral Procession of Juliet and a Solemn Dirge.
The vocal parts by Messrs. Broadhurst, Brown, &c.

She was at this time only nineteen years old. Her figure was of the finest model, her features beautiful, yet full of expression, displaying at once purity of mind and loveliness of countenance. Her demeanour is graceful and modest, her voice melody itself in all its tones. A full-length picture of her is to be seen on the great stair at the Garrick Club, the work of George Jones, R.H.A., in which she is portrayed in a dramatic and inspired attitude, resting on a harp, the reason for the introduction of such an iustrument not being very obvious, as she was in no way connected with the lyrical stage. It probably was introduced to betoken national feeling. She had a curious likeness to the features of the Princess Charlotte.

The success of the night was complete and assured. All noted her exquisite sensibility and natural feeling expressed without affectation. Macready, who was present at one of the first performances, was enraptured, and seemed to think, after a long experience, that he had never witnessed her equal. "She united," he said, "all voices in her praise. Her beauty, grace, and simplicity were the theme of every tongue. Crowds were nightly disappointed in finding room to witness her enchanting performances. Juliet, Belvidera, Mrs. Haller, Mrs. Beverley were again realities upon the scene, attested with enthusiasm by the tears and applauding shouts of admiring thousands. In the native elegance, the feminine sweetness, the unaffected earnestness, and gushing passions of Miss O'Neill the stage had received a worthy successor to Mrs. Siddons.

"The charming picture she presented was one that time could not efface from the memory. It was not altogether the matchless beauty of form and face, but the spirit of perfect innocence and purity that seemed to glisten in the speaking eyes and breathe from her chiselled lips. There was something in her look, voice, manner, and artlessness, so foreign to the generality of stage performers that riveted the spectator's gaze. Through my whole experience, hers was the only representation of Juliet I have seen." Boaden, a sound critic of much experience, pronounced that she "owed everything to extreme sensibility. She gives herself up entirely to the impression of circumstances; is borne along the tide of passion and absorbed in her sufferings; she realises all that is suggested by the progress of the story, and answers the utmost expectation of the beholder. She does not lift the imagination out of itself. Every nerve is strained, her frame is convulsed, her breath suspended, her forehead knit together, fate encloses her round and seizes on his prey." While Poole, the facetious author of "Paul Pry," gives a cooler and more deliberate judgment: "She is an actress of strong and well-directed sense and powerful feeling, her voice is good, particularly in its undertones, and without effort, or affectation, or anything like the common stage style of speaking; it is modulated entirely by the thought or feeling she has to express. The same may be said of her countenance, and nearly as much of her action. This, though always correct and graceful to a certain degree, is sometimes excessive; as, for instance, in her soliloquy with the phial as

Juliet. She is not a mere maker of detached points, a strong marker of individual passages; she does not point a word into something that sounds like an epigram, and which, by dazzling you for a moment, leaves you in doubt whether it be right or wrong, but her excellence consists in exhibiting a regular, unbroken, and consistent character, from which she never departs for the purpose of bringing down a huzza. She cannot be compared with Mrs. Siddons at present, but she is much nearer to her in excellence than any of the others are to Miss O'Neill." While later, at Bath, Mrs. Piozzi was enraptured: "Our ladies are all in hysterics, our gentlemen's hands quite blistered with clapping, and her stage companions worn to a thread with standing up like chains in a children's country dance, while she alone commands the attention of such audiences as Bath never witnessed. The boxkeepers said last night that the numbers Kean drew after him were nothing to it."

The announcements that followed in the bills are amusing, and indicate the crescendo of success: "The public are respectfully informed that, in consequence of the flattering and universal applause which attended the performance of Miss O'Neill's Juliet, she will repeat that character to-night." "Miss O'Neill's second performance of Juliet was greeted with the most rapturous and unprecedented applause from an overflowing audience." Then followed Isabella and Belvidera. "The first performance of Miss O'Neill's Belvidera having been honoured with the enthusiastic and long-continued acclamations of an overflowing audience, she will repeat Juliet on every Monday night till further notice."

This form continued till Nov. 1. Isabella she played "with a success perfectly unprecedented," having performed it for the second time "to an audience whose numbers and whose rapturous expressions of delight admit not of increase." In this triumphant course she continued for about six years, when she captivated Sir Wrixon Becher, an Irish baronet, and an excellent amateur actor. This gentleman she married in 1820. It was said that during her short career she had accumulated a sum of about £20,000, out of which she filially provided for "Captain Costigan," taking care of her brothers and sisters also. She died about twelve years ago at nearly eighty years of age.

A Bayreuth Pilgrimage.

By Hermann Klein.

THERE are two ways of "doing" Bayreuth. One is to make as straight as you can to that out-of-the-way Bavarian town, box yourself up in it for a week or so, listen to as many of the Wagner performances as may be given in the time, and then go home again. This is the real form of pilgrimage. The other is to go on a holiday tour which takes in Bayreuth *en route*, and enables you to pay the necessary visits without compelling you to stay there an hour longer than is absolutely requisite. This is the imitation form of pilgrimage, and I recommend it, with all confidence, to weary musicians generally and overworked critics in particular. The two courses were before me in August last, when I had made up my mind to hear the Wagner Plays, and I did not hesitate which to choose. *Va pour l'imitation!*

I was one of a numerous party, which, after all, was only correct. A pilgrimage, real or otherwise, should, to be worth anything, consist of more than a solitary pilgrim. Our plan was to make for a village called Rupprechtstegen, about twenty-five miles "this side of" Bayreuth, on the line between that place and Nuremberg. We had been told that good hotel accommodation, at reasonable prices, could be had there, and that the village lay in the midst of extremely romantic scenery—advantages certainly not to be obtained at Bayreuth. In our journey thither we made the mistake of hurrying slightly, but those who follow our example another year—and as the Wagner Plays bid fair to become of annual recurrence, I am hoping these notes may not be without practical value to some who read them—need not imitate us in this. Nevertheless, we spent a few pleasant hours in Brussels and slept overnight at Cologne. From the latter city to Rupprechtstegen the railway journey occupies an entire day, and we made it without break, save changing trains at Würz-

burg and Nuremberg. Now the preferable plan, to my thinking, would be to take the Rhine steamer from Cologne to Mayence, sleep there, take the train again to Nuremberg next day, and then either go on direct to Rupprechtstegen, only another hour's journey, or else make a short stay in that remarkable old city which is justly deemed one of the sights of Europe. We elected to pay our visit to Nuremberg after we had finished at Bayreuth, but that was simply because our seats at the theatre had been booked for certain dates, and we should have more time to spare afterwards. For the present, therefore, I had, perforce, to be content with a distant glimpse of the quaint spires and wonderful roofs of the ancient city, lighted up by a lovely sunset, as the train went past a series of painfully modern suburbs towards that paradise in the plains of Bavaria—that gem of Franconian Switzerland—the Pegnitz-Thal.

It was late on a Sunday evening when we arrived at Rupprechtstegen, but, thanks to a full moon and cloudless sky, a tolerable idea could be formed of the beauty of the, to us, *terra incognita* upon which we were entering. Charming, though, as it appeared on a moonlight night, the scene that met our gaze as we looked out of the hotel windows in the bright glare of the morning sun was infinitely more superb. We were in a green and picturesque valley, amid lofty hills, now rich with firs and foliage, now clad with bold masses of dolomite rock, while at our feet ran the narrow stream of the Pegnitz, flowing swiftly on its way to Nuremberg. Here was a lovely spot, indeed, to make our headquarters what time we should be fulfilling our pilgrims' task at hot, dusty, uninteresting Bayreuth! It was no deception: the country was beautiful, the hotel comfortable and not dear, and the train service tolerably good. On one point we had been misinformed. It had been stated that free conveyance by the special train to and from Bayreuth would be accorded to holders of tickets for the Festival performances. By the time we came upon the scene this privilege, if it had ever been granted, was no longer in force, and we had to pay our fares. Yet living at Rupprechtstegen was so much cheaper than it would have been at Bayreuth that the addition of the few marks for the short railway journey still left us considerable gainers, apart from the incalculable advantage of staying at a place where we had only to cross the threshold to find any quantity of delightful walks, or, if

we cared to indulge our angling propensities, to fish in a stream stocked with the finest trout and grayling.

But the Wagner Plays—what of them? What was "Parsifal" like, and how was "Tristan" done? Be patient, gentle reader; remember, I am only describing the imitation form of pilgrimage, in which you are supposed to have eyes and ears for "notes by the way" as well as for those that greet you when you have joined the crowd of worshippers at the master's shrine. I take for granted that you know something already of the manner in which they do things at Bayreuth. You must have read again and again about that wonderful opera-house, with its vast stage, its unseen orchestra, and its ample auditorium—an oblong sea of stalls gradually rising row upon row from front to back, and bounded upon either hand with lofty columns that enclose curtained doors in place of private boxes or side seats. Sit where you will, your view of the stage is unhampered and complete; and, once seated, the lights turned down, the whole place so dark that you cannot see your neighbour's face, beware of making the slightest noise. So acute is the silence that a whisper becomes magnified into a loud-toned utterance. A modest cough or suppressed sneeze is regarded as an intolerable nuisance, and to drop a stick or an opera-glass is an act of heresy that brings a volley of hushes and a thousand unspoken maledictions upon the delinquent's devoted head. It is this intense earnestness of thought and purpose, this undivided concentration of the faculties on the work in hand, that renders a Bayreuth performance the solemn and engrossing function that it is. It may be presumed that everybody who goes to this distant German town is more or less serious in his intent to study Wagner's later works as they cannot be studied elsewhere. But, be the object what it may, be the spectator a Wagnerian fanatic or a stickler for orthodox forms, a skilled musician or a simple lover of art, a youthful enthusiast or a *blasé* opera-goer, I defy him to resist the spell that comes over all alike when once the doors of the temple are closed, the world and daylight are shut out, and those weird, wonderful sounds begin to rise in strange yet fascinating harmony from the hidden instruments below.

Thus prepared and, in a sense, purified for the task of "assisting" at a representation such as that of "Parsifal," one can appreciate in fuller measure than would otherwise be possible

the earnest fervour with which the artists do their work, their utter forgetfulness of self, their absolute proficiency in the duties allotted to them. They are the leading artists of the German lyric stage, and it is their delight to come here and labour for the glory of the revered master whose cause they made their own in the days when he was living and moving in their midst. They remain to reflect the spirit of his works, and well do they accomplish their mission. Little wonder is it that in such an atmosphere, and under such conditions, Wagner's music-dramas create an impression wholly different to what has been felt when they have been performed in ordinary opera-houses. Even the classic stage of Munich cannot impart to them that subtle, indefinable quality the secret of which has been mastered at Bayreuth. This comparison does not, of course, apply to "Parsifal," which has not been given elsewhere—yet; and no one possessing a grain of artistic feeling can have witnessed the deeply solemn and impressive performance of Wagner's "swan-song" without instinctively trusting that the opportunity for such a comparison may never arrive. Should it do so, there can be no question that the true religious and poetic significance of the work will be, for the time being, destroyed, even as the rendering of that strangely different masterpiece, "Tristan und Isolde," for the first time at Bayreuth, has just served to reveal therein phases of beauty and meaning which had never been perceived before.

The performances which I saw in August were the concluding ones of the series that commenced on July 23. The town was as full as it had been at the outset, and the houses were not less crowded on each occasion. I was struck, however, by the almost total absence of English and Americans. At the beginning hundreds had been there, but by degrees they had all gone, and left the field free for the Germans—and French. Yes, quite a numerous sprinkling of French. Not a little amusing was it to hear their comments, spoken, as a rule, in irreproachable Parisian, or to observe the inward chuckling of the "natives" as they bethought them of the many miles their neighbours had travelled to hear the music of the man whose operas they refuse to have mounted at their own theatres. One Gallic enthusiast was laden with a score of "Parsifal," which he had evidently brought with the intention of following it during the performance. He might have saved himself the trouble; not a note would he be able to discern so soon as the

final warning *motive* had sounded, and the electric light was lowered. I have only heard of one individual who was able to follow a performance here from a score, and that was a distinguished musical countryman of our own, who had permission to sit on the steps leading down to the orchestra; but what he gained in one respect he lost in another, for he was unable to obtain the smallest glimpse of the stage. It is the sense of entire isolation and the absence of all disturbing influences that renders the illusion of the scene complete; and so complete was it in my own case that in the first act of "Parsifal," when the marvellous panoramic change from the interior of Castle Monsalvat to the Hall of the Grail took place, and the gigantic landscape imperceptibly began to move bodily from right to left, I fancied it was the theatre that was moving, and involuntarily clutched my seat for support. Take it for all in all, despite the tediousness of the monologues uttered by Gurnemanz, the first act of "Parsifal" is, in its musical and religious aspect, the most overwhelmingly grand conception that lyric art can boast. I know nothing in the domain of opera that has made the same ineffaceable impression on me as the scene wherein King Amfortas administers the rites of the Grail. I can only compare it to the effect of the "Hallelujah" Chorus sung at a Handel Festival, or a perfect rendering of the slow movement in Beethoven's "Eroïca" symphony.

After such an act as this Wagner ran the risk of an anti-climax. He simply avoided the catastrophe by supplying a contrast. And what a contrast!—from the sacred functions appertaining to the Knights of the Grail to the temptation of Parsifal by Klingror's maidens and the inscrutable Kundry; from the "dim, religious light" of a noble edifice to a magic garden filled with huge flowers of every dazzling hue. Then, after a long period of "storm and stress," back once more to peaceful Monsalvat, the exquisite softness of the "Char-Freitag's Zauber," the recognition of Parsifal, and the joyful praises of the voices from the "middle and extreme heights" as the white dove descends and hovers over the head of the newly-made king. From a dramatic point of view the construction of all this is perfect, while much of the music is extremely beautiful, the orchestration especially being in the highest degree masterly. Nothing, in the magnificent performances at which I was present was more remarkable than the deliciously

refined and subdued rendering of the instrumentation; not a point, not a *nuance* was lost, yet it was ever the voices, not the instruments, that predominated when the two were combined. The same feature struck me more forcibly still in "Tristan." As I had previously heard this work, it had seemed a physical impossibility for the singers to ever have the best of it with the orchestra. The change was a grateful surprise. Not only were those excellent artists, Vogl and Rosa Sucher, enabled to make themselves heard without screaming at the top of their voices, but their fine phrasing invested portions of the vocal music with a charm it had not before possessed. In many respects the Bayreuth performance of "Tristan" was a revelation, and in an artistic sense its choice as one of this year's Festival Plays was amply justified, although it did not draw so largely as "Parsifal." To the two works "Die Meistersinger" will be added for the series that is to take place next summer.

It was a treat, after an exhausting day at Bayreuth, to return to the tranquillity and repose of Rupprechtstegen. Life there was so delightful that I felt half sorry when the main object of our pilgrimage had been achieved, and the time came to move on. Willingly would I have made another excursion to Velden—just such a quaint old village as Nuremberg is a city—or visited for a second time the stalactite caves at Krottensee, which ought to be much more famous than they are. But our plans were made, and we were due in Nuremberg. Thence one section of our party, not having had enough of Wagner, went on to Munich and heard "Der Ring des Nibelungen" on the opening nights of the opera season there. The others went direct to Innsbrück, starting from there on a walking tour through the Austrian Tyrol, taking Salzburg, Munich, and Cologne again on the way home. Altogether it was a model pilgrimage of its kind, and let me not omit my expressions of gratitude for one great and rare blessing—in course of the three weeks that we were away we only had two days' bad weather.

"A RUN OF LUCK," AT DRURY LANE THEATRE. 1886.

MR. E. W. GARDINER. MR. WM. RIGNOLD. MR HARRY NICHOLLS. MISS ALMA MURRAY. MISS SOPHIE EYRE. MR. J. G. GRAHAME.

From a Photograph specially taken for "The Theatre" by Barraud, 263, Oxford Street, W.

Our Play-Box.

"A RUN OF LUCK."

A new and original sporting drama, in four acts, by Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris.
Produced at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on Saturday, August 28, 1886.

Harry Copsley	Mr. J. G. Grahame.	The Auctioneer	Mr. Marshall Moore.
John Copsley..	Mr. J. Beauchamp.	Tom Catchpole	Mr. L. Merrick.
Squire Selby	Mr. William Rignold.	Hughie Hawthorn ...	Mr. E. Powell.
George Selby...	Mr. E. W. Gardiner.	Cerberus	Mr. Russell.
Captain Trevor	Mr. Chas. Cartwright.	The Railway Porter ...	Mr. Arthur St. George.
Charlie Sandown	Mr. Harry Nicholls.	Daisy Copsley	Miss Alma Murray.
Jim Ladybird	Mr. Victor Stevens.	Lucy Byefield	Miss Sophie Eyre.
Lord Earlswood	Mr. Basil West.	Mabel Selby	Miss Compton.
The Duke	Mr. Arthur Yates.	Aunt Mary	Miss M. A. Victor.
Joe Bunny	Mr. Alfred Balfour.	Phœbe Wood	Miss Edith Bruce.
Sam Tomkinson	Mr. Napier Barry.	Mrs. Wilmore	Miss Marie Daltra.
Station-master	Mr. W. T. Elworthy.	Mrs. Seymour	Miss Lizzie Byron.
Lawyer Parsons	Mr. Louis Calvert.	Maud de Lacy	Miss Lillian Millward.
Judge Parke	Mr. J. Ridley.	Mary	Miss Lydia Rachel.
E. S. Chown	Mr. Parker.		

Once more the indomitable energy and marvellous ingenuity of Mr. Augustus Harris have been exemplified. "A Run of Luck" is the greatest success of melodramatic plays produced this year. When it was rumoured that horses were to take a part in the piece, that real live hunters were to be seen on the stage, there were many people who held up their hands and prophesied failure—failure absolute and complete. But those who had witnessed the previous efforts of Mr. Harris were more hopeful, and they were not doomed to disappointment. Horses certainly do appear on Old Drury's stage in the course of the performance of "A Run of Luck," but they are by no means the chief attraction in the drama. Messrs. Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris have brought out another drama, which is essentially human. It appeals to all hearts, and wins the sympathies of every spectator. The story is told crisply, and it contains plenty of action. We feel that the various characters live, and move, and have their being in every day life, and it is this truth to nature which attracts the public. It is a sight in itself worthy of a visit to Drury Lane to watch the immense house crowded from floor to ceiling by an audience which watches every movement, follows every speech, on the stage with an interest rarely evinced in any dramatic production. It goes without saying that Mr. Harris has mounted the play in the most complete manner possible.

Here is the story of the piece: In the first act we are at the training stables of John Copsley. His daughter, Daisy, is engaged to be married to Harry Copsley, an industrious young fellow who is rapidly making his way in the world. But Daisy Copsley has the misfortune to be loved by George Selby, a reckless young spendthrift, who has

got heavily into debt, and given post-obits on the death of his father, Squire Selby. He is in the hands of a couple of rascals, Captain Trevor, an aristocratic villain, and Charlie Sandown, a veritable cockney, with a turn for misquoting French and Latin phrases, a character played to the life by Mr. Nicholls. George Selby is engaged to his cousin, Mabel Selby, a wealthy heiress, when it comes to the knowledge of Trevor that Harry Copsley has no claim to the name he bears. He uses this knowledge to force Copsley to resign his claims to Daisy's hand, thus to make room for George Selby, and so to clear the way—as he is in the squire's good graces—for his own marriage with Mabel Selby. Harry Copsley does not retire before the charge of illegitimacy, but boldly faces the matter, and discovers that he is the son of Squire Selby, whom he confronts. The second act brings us to London, where Daisy Copsley is decoyed to a house of ill-repute by Mrs. Willmore, an agent of Captain Trevor's, who pretends that she is taking Daisy as a companion to a lady, when she well knows that she is compassing her moral destruction. An elaborate ball-room, filled with over-dressed females and their lovers, gives place to a boudoir, where Daisy, who has been drugged, is accosted by George Selby, who, half intoxicated with champagne, has been misled by finding the girl in such a house. When the truth is explained to him, he boldly rescues the girl from her perilous condition, and the scene, again changing, presents the outside of the house and the escape of Daisy. The exterior of Selby Hall is the scene of the third act. Here the machinations of Trevor and Sandown appear to prosper. They make the old squire believe that George is the betrayer of Daisy, but the squire has become aware of his son's connection with the post-obits, and quarrels with him just before starting for the hunt. What follows is almost expected by everyone. The squire is brought home on a hurdle, seriously hurt by a fall from his horse, and is thought to be on the point of death. Trevor informs George Selby that the documents he had signed were transfers to him of the estate which he seems on the point of inheriting, when Harry Copsley proclaims that he is the heir to Selby Hall. In the fourth and last act the excitement is admirably worked up. George Selby has become owner of a favourite race-horse, "Daisy," which is entered and heavily backed for an important race. Trevor and Sandown have an order to take possession of the horse for a debt of young Selby's, and their endeavours to secure the animal so that it may not run, and that Selby may thus be disgraced, are cleverly checkmated by Harry Selby, who sends the blackguards careering over the country after an old farm horse. "Daisy" is brought safely to Goodwood, saddled and mounted, is just about to start, when Trevor and company arrest her. Happily, old Squire Selby comes to the rescue, borrows the money on the race-course wherewith to discharge George's debt, "Daisy" is freed, and wins the race in a canter. The honour of the Selby family is retained, and Harry is united to Daisy Copsley.

The acting of "The Run of Luck" is generally excellent. Miss Alma Murray is the most sympathetic of heroines, and Mr. E. W. Gardiner is fresh, easy, and agreeable as George Selby. Mr. J. G. Grahame fills the rather unsatisfactory part of Harry Copsley with uncommon ability. He succeeds in making the part acceptable, thanks to his fine style and power of expression, whereas a less superior actor might easily have made Copsley a bore. Mr. Harry Nicholls, the delight of a Drury Lane audience, is immensely amusing as the sporting Charlie Sandown, and Mr. Charles Cartwright is incisive as Trevor. Miss Compton is not well suited as an *ingénue*, and Miss Sophie Eyre is a little too melodramatic in her part. Mr. William Rignold, Mr. John Beauchamp, Mr. Victor Stevens, and Miss Edith Bruce assist the play by their careful acting.

AUSTIN BRERETON.

"SISTER MARY."

A play, in four acts, written by WILSON BARRETT and CLEMENT SCOTT.
Produced for the first time, in London, at the Comedy Theatre, on Saturday, September 11, 1886.

Captain Walter Leigh..	Mr. LEONARD BOYNE.	Miss Mary Lisle	Miss LINOARD.
"Sandy" Dyson	Mr. J. H. DARNLEY.	Rose Reade	Miss MAGGIE HUNT.
Colonel Malcolm	Mr. P. PERCEVAL-CLARK.	Miss Kate Malcolm	Miss B. HORLOCK.
Harry Reade	Miss RUBY MAUD.	Miss Lucy Carrol...	Mrs. A. M. MOORE.
Jack Maddison	Mr C. DALTON.	Miss Arabella Perkins ..	Miss MARIE FRASER.
Jack Davis	Mr. HARRY-FENWICK.	Miss Agatha Malcolm ...	Mrs. CANNINOE.
Bill Dredge	Mr. H. V. LAURENCE.	Charity Binks	Miss RETTA WALTON.
Corporal Molloy	Mr. R. HICKS.	Susan	Miss ISA STAUNTON.

The ever-rolling wave of time bears curious changes on its bosom. Only a few weeks ago, at the Comedy Theatre, we were listening to the pretty frivolity of comic opera, with its glitter, its merriment, its sentimental ballad anent the stars, or the moon, or some such atmospherical inhabitant; its drinking chorus, given by the inevitable village throng, to the puns and ready gags of a popular low comedian; and to-day the panorama has moved, and we have another scene.

A picture of human life; no extravagances, no absurdities, no gorgeous puppets, but real figures, illuminated with all the purposes, the hopes, struggles, passions, fears, joys, and happiness that fill the human breast. The sparkle of the tinselled burlesque has flickered away, the dance is over, the songs are done, only the music remains —music of words and thoughts, the wailing melody of mutual love, of human weakness, of woman's self-sacrifice and suffering, of man's despair; and mingling in towards the end the deep, harmonious notes of trust, forgiveness, and future gladness, that come softly as the strain touches the silent chord of death. Such a play as "Sister Mary" cannot be judged or criticised in one visit; its motive, its purpose, its truth must be clearly learned and thoroughly understood. It is essentially a play that appeals to women; it touches on a point that for ages has been a subject for argument, for controversy, even for contention, and it seems very probable that only at the hands of

women will it receive its real verdict. The story of "Sister Mary" must by now be more than well known, so it will not be repeated here; indeed, it would be a difficult task to condense in a few words a plot apparently so simple, and yet so complex. There is more to tell than the brief outline of a man's downward career checked by a woman's pure influence, and the ghost of that man's past rising as a barrier in the very moment of his greatest happiness. This may be sketched, and easily, too; but the thoughts that come as our hearts alternately throb with their joy and ache with their misery are not so lightly to be dismissed.

To touch, however, briefly on the construction of the piece. There can be no hesitation in saying that the first act, although most necessary as a key-note, almost as a prologue to the three following, is the weakest, both dramatically and literally speaking; old acquaintances crop up here and there, such as the very apt entrance of Davis just as Rose Reade has told her secret, and the quick and rather extraordinary resemblance traced by Walter Leigh in the boy's face; but we forgive all this, and more, for the beauty and poetry of the second act (although the climax comes almost with jarring effect after the exquisite delicacy of the love-scene), the dramatic grandeur and power of the third act, and the picturesqueness of the last. No stronger or more truthfully pathetic scene than that which takes place in the third act has ever been witnessed, and every word, every syllable, is followed with a rapt, hushed attention, that must be even more welcome to the authors' ears than rounds of applause.

The character of Mary Lisle is one of the most delicate, yet human, sketches that has appeared on the stage of late years. Throughout the entire delineation of their heroine's nature, the authors have been marvellously consistent; the smallest touch has not been forgotten. Even in the moment of her greatest anguish, when her brain reels before the misery she is called upon to bear, her pity still lives for the flowers that in her frenzy of pain she has half destroyed. When the blow falls from Rose's lips, the name of her lover is revealed as the boy's father, and she gazes at the picture that testifies doubly to the horrible truth, it is only for a moment she is changed; the sight of Rose's misery wakes her from her dazed condition, and once more her sympathy goes to her sister and her friend. If, as has been stated so often, the stage holds the power of giving forth influences for good or bad, then most surely must a character like this leave its mark for purity, simplicity, and woman's love, added to determination, strength of will, and courage. It has not its equal for beauty, and cannot be surpassed. And yet Mary is real; she exists, she lives. She is not the embodiment of something too good for this world; she visits the sick, yet can enjoy a joke; she can moralise, and yet indulge in very ordinary female superstitions; she has an angel's mind, yet a woman's heart, and this touch of nature is the strongest charm that both the heroine and Walter Leigh possess.

With Rose Reade there is a want of sincerity, of depth. She is miserable, but she is not interesting. She has a sorrow, but it is superficial. Never once does she give the slightest trace of a heart that is dull and aching beneath the cheeriest manner. It may be that the character loses in the representation, but the fact remains there is a fault somewhere, and Rose does not wake our sympathies as she is meant to do. On reflection, however, the question rises, Are our sympathies needed? We have it from Walter Leigh's own lips that the wretched folly never rose from love; it was the outcome of passion, youthful heedlessness, a momentary madness, that mysterious influence that is as far apart from love as the stars are above the earth, and, unless we follow him wrongly, Rose was not deceived. Is a woman, then, be she ever so young and headstrong, who of her own will takes the plunge into the dark waters of shame, to be pitied? Is the wrong all on the shoulders of the man? It is woman's wont to turn the past into a romance. Rose, when she speaks to Mary, confesses that she loves her boy's father as much as in the time gone bye, yet even in her earlier words she allows that there was no excuse to offer save that she was a vain, foolish girl, and that, with no pretence of purer thoughts, they both had fallen. Mary, full of compassion for the sorrowful, ruined woman, speaks bitterly against the man. It is an old cry she utters, a cry that has come from many a woman's heart—that while the weaker bears the suffering and the world's reproach, the stronger rides remorselessly away. But we must not judge Walter Leigh by this truism.

When first we see him, even with the taint of drink upon him, we recognise him as a man who should be among the best and the bravest. He has gradually sunk into this morbid, unhealthy state through causes that are not given us, but which must have existed, for to say that Walter Leigh becomes what he is in the first act purely from remorse over an action in which his higher feelings have never been touched is to preach nonsense. As he tells us later on, he has regretted that past, how bitterly and sincerely none can know but himself. But though he searched for Rose, though he tried to make atonement when passion had cleared away, and he learned what this must mean to the girl, still his failure is not, and could not be, sufficient motive to debase and degrade so manly and fine natured a man. No, it is clear—and Mr. Boyne's wonderfully excellent impersonation makes it clearer—that other things had helped to bring him to that state of sullen recklessness that sent him desperate to opium or the brandy flask. And having traced his waking, his efforts, and success, having learned to know his simple, trusting, yet brave heart to its uttermost depths, we cannot shut our ears to him as he pleads to Mary, we cannot but give him our most earnest sympathy as he stands on the threshold of happiness and sees his dead and gone passion thrust aside his pure, great love. He is so human, so eager, so stunned with grief, that he commands our tears and receives our

pity. This scene, as played by Miss Lingard and Mr. Boyne, is magnificent in its comprehensive detail, in its strong, yet natural, power in the artistic completeness that prevails throughout. To conclude with one remark on the brief sketch of Walter Leigh's character, many have said, and many doubtless think, that when he has discovered from Mary's lips that Rose still lives and is unmarried, there is but one thing for him to do, and that is to make her his wife. To this, however, there is an answer. Until he was brought face to face with his child, we are not given to understand that Walter had the slightest knowledge or suspicion that Rose was a mother; to him she was but the memory of a past passion placed in the category of folly and regret, and that with the advent of love had faded into misty forgetfulness. Would it be justice to the man or to the woman to bring them together? An unhappy marriage would be no atonement for a wrong that did not exist, nor could it give the child a legitimate status. With his heart yearning for his pure, sweet love, the woman who had lifted him from the slough of despair and let him taste the joys of fame and happiness, what would have been his future and the future of the woman whom he could never love, and who as time passed would grow unbearable to him as the perpetual record of his present misery and his wretched past?

Miss Lingard has brought to London a company that has already made acquaintance with the provinces; the minor characters are all carefully played, more particularly the Charity-girl, and Mrs. Canninge's maiden elderly lady, which she invests with quaint, humorous touches that make the small part stand out; the laughing, chattering bridesmaids, full of excitement and ingenuous conceit, are as real as though they had been transplanted from a veritable marriage feast; and Sandy Dyson, the half-lazy, indifferent man of fashion, with an eye-glass and a drawl, and a heart full of British pluck and vigour, who wakes up from his ordinary saunter through life to tell the story of his "pal's" courage and success—have we not met him everyday, and do we not recognise in him the stuff that makes England what she is, the quiet determination and courage—the endurance and the pride—that sums up the nature of our soldiers?

To speak of the dialogue is a delightful and grateful task. At once polished and refined; fresh and natural at points, it rises to the realms of poetry—and there criticism ceases. Too often, alas! are good actors and actresses sentenced to utter language that defies the most strenuous endeavours to be endowed with beauty of diction or delicate thought, but in this case the lines have each a special and thoughtful meaning, and, spoken as they are by Miss Lingard, receive the attention and praise they merit. Never before has Miss Lingard appeared to such advantage; she has here no wandering mind to portray, no further exercise of her skill in depicting mental aberration; she has a woman beneath her touch, a loving, gracious,

sweet-natured woman, whose very smile brings happiness to those around; she has claims, too, on her power, and how well she succeeds we have already said. It takes two to act a difficult scene well, and Miss Lingard is to be congratulated on having so able a collaborator as Mr. Boyne, whose clever delineation from first to last is as delightful as it is artistic—indeed, those who miss seeing the third act of "Sister Mary," not to mention the whole play, will have lost a treat, both as regards artists, descriptive poetical writing, and dramatic power; but it is not likely that many will suffer this loss, for, from all signs, early as it is, the piece has started on a long and successful career.

E. R.

"HARVEST."

A new and original play, in a prologue and three acts, by H. Hamilton.
Produced, under the management of C. H. Hawtrey, at the Princess's Theatre, on Saturday, September 18, 1886.

Sir Noel Musgrave	Mr. Arthur Dacre.	Nora Fitzgerald... ...	Miss Fanny Brough.
Colonel Tressider	Mr. Brandon Thomas.	Lettice Vane	Miss Edith Chester.
Bevil Brooke	Mr. C. H. Hawtrey.	Miss Macleod	Miss Carlotta Addison.
Roy Marston	Mr. Yorke Stephens.	Mrs. Marston	Miss Amy Roseble.
Hamish...	Mr. W. H. Denny.		

"A thoroughly sympathetic, popular play," is the verdict of a London morning journal on "Harvest." If there is one thing wanting in this piece it is sympathy, sympathy in its motive, sympathy in its characters, and the populace can hardly be expected to take much interest in that which is distinctly unsympathetic. The central figure of the play, she who poses as a heroine, is merely the embodiment of a cold, calculating, relentless, revengeful woman. Brenda Musgrave has been cruelly wronged; she therefore takes it upon herself to execute vengeance upon the man who has injured her. Her mode of carrying out her scheme is as curious as it is obviously unnatural. She hides herself for twenty years, waits until her hair is silvery white, and then denies her son the chance of obtaining a name from his father, and, also, takes him from the girl he loves. So that her revenge does not fall on the wrong-doer, but upon the innocent. Let us glance at the story: Noel and Brenda Musgrave are living as man and wife in a cottage in Wales. Their union of six years has turned out unhappily. The man regrets a marriage which has prevented him from enjoying the ease which a wealthy wife would have secured him; the woman sighs for the love that is hers no more. Relief for the man is presently brought by Captain Tressider, who discovers that the Scotch marriage of his friend, Noel Musgrave, was illegal, and that, as a consequence, Noel is at liberty to marry whom he chooses. An affectionate letter from a wealthy widow (who, by the way, is ignorant of Noel's connection with Brenda) decides the mean fellow. He denies justice to the mother of his child, and refuses her appeal on bended knees to make her his wife. She warns him that his sin will come home to him, and so ends the prologue to this strange story, the man going one way, the woman and her child the other. Twenty years elapse, and in a beautiful glen in Ireland the

boy, Geoffroy, now developed into a rising young artist, meets Lettice Vane, a pretty, engaging girl, the owner of the place, and—the daughter of the woman for whom Noel had forsaken Brenda. Noel, now a widower, wishes to discover Brenda and marry her—not from any idea of repentance, be it noted, but merely that he may legitimise Geoffroy, and so gain an heir to his estates and title, for he has now become Sir Noel Musgrave, Bart. The love of Geoffroy and Lettice for each other stands confessed. Brenda learns it, and she also knows of Noel's intention in regard to her. She consequently binds her son to a promise that he will implicitly obey her in a certain request, and at the crucial moment she exacts the fulfilment of the oath, tears Geoffroy from the girl he loves, and once more hides herself from Noel. A year passes, and all the interested persons meet once more, and the conclusion, which is inevitable under the circumstances, is reached: Brenda returns to Noel, and the lovers are reunited.

Enough has been already shown to prove that the character of Brenda is entirely unsympathetic. Women are not, as a rule, so vindictive as to wait twenty years for the accomplishment of a cruel revenge. They suffer and are silent. Brenda Musgrave is not true to nature. One can understand her passionate outburst when she hears that Noel intends to abandon her, but it is difficult to fathom, and impossible to sympathise with, her later action. One would have thought that her sorrow and grey hairs would have brought softness and forgiveness to her heart, instead of which she is as cold but less yielding than steel. Even supposing her hate could have lasted so long, surely the love of her son for a delightful girl would have turned her from her purpose. On the contrary, it seems to harden her more and more. She separates the lovers for a year, and then only consents to the marriage after the duty of unselfishness has been taught her by the girl. She is perpetually prating of her love for her son, but I have yet to learn that it is a mark of affection for a mother to endeavour to blast the happiness of her child. If Brenda Musgrave had had a scrap of real love for her son in her composition she would have met Noel's wishes without delaying a year before she did so, and thus causing pain to two young people. She is as unladylike as she is unnatural, as witness her insulting manner and words to Lettice Vane in the second act.

The other chief characters are as little entitled to sympathy as the so-called heroine. Of Noel Musgrave, who deserts the mother of his child in order to buy a position in the world, nothing need be said. Tressider is almost as great a blackguard as his friend Noel. He points the way for the separation, and afterwards appears as a retainer on the estate of Sir Noel Musgrave, Bart. One character, however, in the play is interesting, sympathetic, and natural. This is Lettice Vane, an ingénue of a most delightful type. M. Sardou himself, who is so proud of the young girls he knows so well how to depict, might have drawn her. Unaffectedly open and generous in

her manner, she is the one refreshing figure amid others which are weak when they are not absolutely antagonistic to our feelings.

A word as to the technical defects of the play. The chief weakness in the construction of the drama lies in the fact, which I have already pointed out elsewhere, that the progression of the action is mainly due to the fact that it arises from one character overhearing the plans or talk of another. In the prologue, Brenda overhears from the conversation of Noel and Tressider that she is not a wife; in the second act the love proposals of two pairs of lovers are heard by Tressider and Brenda respectively; and in the last act one person overhears another to an extent which is as ridiculous as it is weak. In minor points the construction is extremely faulty. The means used by Tressider for discovering the spot whereon Noel and Brenda went through the Scotch marriage ceremony is a map from a Bradshaw's Railway Guide, of all things on earth, which does not even indicate the border line. Then, in a little village room, a letter is left for Noel on the mantelpiece against which he leans for nearly half an hour in a state of presumable blindness until his friend Tressider discovers the document. Again, when Noel and Brenda meet in the glen, the former gives no sign that he recognises the woman with whom he had lived for six years. These faults do not affect the material question at issue, but a young author may be warned against committing similar errors in future. Mr. Hamilton's dialogue is bright, pleasing, and fanciful. It is not always spoken so well as it should be, and there is a little too much of it. Mr. Hamilton is given to clothing an ordinary sentiment or remark in language which is too highly-coloured.

It was fortunate for the play that Brenda Musgrave was represented by an actress of such a determined style and such excellent powers of declamation as Miss Amy Roselle, who held her audience completely in several difficult and risky scenes. The part of Noel Musgrave does not contain, in itself, much variety; it leaves the actor of it to supply the light and shade. Mr. Arthur Dacre did not entirely succeed in doing this after the first act, in which he was really admirable. Mr. Brandon Thomas, as Tressider, appeared to me to have but little hold of the part on the first night. Mr. Yorke Stephens was somewhat colourless as Geoffroy; he did not impress by his earnestness. A speech allotted to him about Bohemia (too long by half) was delivered without a touch of enthusiasm; and for this speech to have made its proper impression on the audience, enthusiasm on the part of the actor was the one thing needful. A sentimental harangue is of little use if it is not—apparently, at least—sincere. Clever Miss Fanny Brough acted most pleasingly as a bright Irish young lady, who has a lover in one Bevil Brooke, a good-tempered young Englishman of the order of "Johnnies," who was successfully represented by Mr. C. H. Hawtrey. Mr. Hamilton has put into the mouth of Nora Fitzgerald expressions which no Irish woman of the better class

would dream of using, and Miss Brough's accent was much too pronounced; so that the character was not always so acceptable as it might otherwise have been. Miss Macleod, a gentle, kind-hearted lady, who has nothing whatever to do with the piece, was presented with grace and finish by Miss Carlotta Addison. Mr. W. H. Denny, in the small part of a crusty Scotch servant, Hamish, acted with care and showed a good idea of "character;" but his accent was as much Irish as Scotch. I have left to the last mention of Miss Edith Chester, a young actress new to the stage, who played Lettice Vane. Miss Chester has that inestimable quality in an actress of being simple and natural; she acted engagingly throughout, with no sign of affectation. Her playing in a scene in which Lettice confesses her love to Geoffroy was marked by the greatest possible refinement and ingenuousness. Miss Chester is a welcome addition to the ranks of our young actresses. The mounting of the play is rich and tasteful, although what is the precise value of the elaborate scenery of the last act—representing the ivy-coloured ruins of an old castle—I cannot imagine. However, it may be argued, if Mr. Hawtrey chooses to spend his money in scenery that is his business, not mine.

Austin Brereton.

Our Omnibus-Box.

Bitter experience teaches us that the French, falsely renowned for their courtesy, are at any rate, so far as the conduct of their theatres and places of amusement are concerned, the most uncivil people on the face of the earth. Whenever French players come to London they are treated with the utmost deference and respect. They are applauded and fêted, and when free from labour at the theatre they can go when they like and occupy whatever seats they choose at the English theatres. No manager in London has ever refused a seat to French artist or journalist whenever they or their companions care to make themselves acquainted with our theatres and our artistic method.

On the occasion of the memorable visits of the Comédie Française to England, both before the Franco-Prussian War and afterwards, the utmost consideration was shown to one and all. A breakfast was organised at the Crystal Palace, presided over by Lord Dufferin and Lord Granville. Various complimentary speeches were made, and the right hand of fellowship was freely extended to M. Got and his clever companions. M. Sarcey, on a subsequent occasion, was made welcome at every London theatre at which he presented himself, and, though he now professes to be ignorant of English, he then freely criticised English acting. Free passes and boxes were showered upon him, and our people were as honestly glad to be seen by so brilliant a writer as he was to criticise.

It is impossible to say that these compliments or courtesies are ever reciprocated. If a London dramatic critic, when in Paris, desires to visit the Théâtre Français, to view its treasures and to consult its invaluable library, he will find it more difficult to obtain admission to them than into a Royal Palace. He may be armed with letters of introduction, but every effort will be made to keep an Englishman out of a French theatre, instead of desiring to see him happy inside. I don't suppose that half a dozen English actors or writers for the stage can boast that they ever received as many passes for a French theatre in the course of their natural lives. It is not that one or the other ever desires to shirk the responsibility of paying. Indeed, they would very much rather pay than not, but there are times when, as for example on the production of a new play in Paris, a booked seat is essentially requisite for an English journalist. Favour in England often procures what money cannot obtain. It is not so in Paris. If you take over letters of recommendation they are ignored; if you require the courtesy of a reply it is denied to you.

The very last occasion on which I visited Paris on business was to see the last failure at the Vaudeville by Sardou. A telegram was despatched from London before I started to secure me a seat, as time was precious. It was ignored. On arriving in Paris I presented letters from mutual friends explaining my situation. To not one of my messages was an answer vouchsafed. I naturally imagined that the theatre was crammed full, and not a seat was to be had for love or money. During the dinner hour I sent out a messenger for a seat as one of the paying public; got it without the least difficulty, and found the theatre half empty, for the play was a failure, absolute and complete. An English acting manager would have answered telegram and letters from a recognised French journalist in five minutes.

But here is an older experience. In the year 1868 I visited Paris, armed with a budget of letters of introduction to French authors and managers signed by Charles Fechter, and delightful letters they were, such as he could write so well. One was a letter to the elder Dumas, and he received me very graciously. I found the veteran novelist working in his shirt sleeves one bright May afternoon, attended by his daughter, Marie Dumas, surrounded by pretty girls who called him "Papa" affectionately, but he could do very little except pass me on to others. Eventually I discovered that the delivery of the letters of introduction took so long a time, and resulted so feebly and unsatisfactorily, that it was then, as now, the far better plan to take a ticket and leave the managers to their own devices. The system of resistance is carried to a ridiculous point by Parisian managers, even if you go over with your pockets full of English gold, prepared to pay for whatever may be suitable for the

English market. No one in his senses grudges ten francs or so for a stall at a French theatre, but considering the manner in which French artists are habitually treated in this country some little civility might be extended to those whose duties lead them to visiting French theatres. I wonder that French actors and actresses ever think it worth while to star in England or America if they regard so cheaply the opinions of America and England.

This induces me to discuss the scandalously ungenerous treatment extended to the ladies and gentlemen of Mr. Augustin Daly's company in Paris the other day. I care not whose fault it was, or for what purpose it was done, but I venture to say that such conduct in London would have been impossible had the company been composed of the veriest tyros and impostors that could compose a dramatic troupe. But it was not so. No candid or disinterested judge of acting—compare it by whatever standard you will—would fail to see in Mr. Daly's company merit of a very remarkable kind. If the modern Parisian stage is overburdened with James Lewises and Mrs. Gilberts, and Ada Rehans and May Irwins, and John Drews, then I should very much like to see them, that is all. I fail myself to discover them. The Théâtre Français is on its last legs. Delaunay has retired. Bartet, who played Zicka in "Dora" at the Vaudeville, is the leading lady of the historical house of Molière. Sara Bernhardt is on the rampage. Coquelin, the first artist in Paris, is about to follow her eccentric example. Got, now that his "lovely companions" are nearly all gone, is like the "last rose of summer left blooming alone." The glories of the days of Bressant and Favart, and Regnier and Plessy, are departed, and it is a matter of the greatest difficulty to mount a classical play to compare even distantly with those seen ten or fifteen years ago. Where, then, do we find these wonderful actors who are so much better than our last American friends? Are they to be found at the modern Vaudeville or Gymnase, where the amateur actor, M. Damala, is accepted as the leading lover? Are they to be discovered in the shoulder-shrugging gentlemen who gesticulate according to pattern, and one and all make all their points by addressing the audience, and breaking down the celebrated "fourth wall," of which we have heard so much.

Mr. Augustin Daly's company went to Paris armed with testimonials from America, England, Hamburg, and Berlin, if, indeed, they were needed. Paris ought to be able to judge a work of art, picture or play, without being taught how to do it. But what did Paris and her journalists do? Set about to ridicule the Americans and to roar with laughter at the American ladies simply because they were not Parisians, and because it is arrogantly assumed that nobody but a Frenchman or a Frenchwoman can act. I refuse to accept the solution of the difficulty put forward by the Parisian journalists them-

selves that they were personally insulted by Mr. Daly, and vented their spleen on Miss Ada Rehan, who had nothing to do with the business management of the tour, and was not concerned in the petty jealousies and trivialities of journalists. I refuse to believe that a critic of the eminence of Vitu could ridicule the pretensions to the title of artist of Mrs. Gibert and James Lewis simply because Mr. Daly had not fed the Parisian critics with pap out of a spoon. The idea of such a thing is too preposterous and ridiculous to be countenanced for one minute. Supposing that the American actors did play in Paris in German farces, and supposing that some of these German farces were in turn taken from French plays, what then? The French critics are not babies and surely do not consider Mrs. Gilbert is not a good actress, or Mr. James Lewis a droll fellow because the French pride is scratched a bit. The fact of the matter is that the American artists were treated, as all English artists are treated in Paris, with undisguised contempt, first because the French do not understand them, and do not care to understand them even if they did. They were treated as Sothern was treated, as John Ryder's Shakespearian company was treated, as English players have been treated in Paris again and again, as Jefferson would be treated if he were foolish enough to go to Paris, although he is a good head and shoulders taller than any French actor of his class that I can call to mind now that Lafont and Regnier have left the stage.

And here I regret that I find myself in opposition to my friend, Mr. Johnson, the lively and accomplished London correspondent of the "Figaro," who has said, or has been reported to have said, that there are only two actors in England—Mr. Henry Irving and Mr. Wilson Barrett—who would be considered in the first-class of actors according to the Parisian estimate. Surely Mr. Johnson is not serious in this assertion? He has studied English acting for several years, and he cannot mean that we play as low down in high-class drama as M. Damala, for instance! Does he mean to say that an actor like Mr. Willard or Mr. Beerbohm-Tree would not be accepted at the Français, that Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Kendal and Mr. Hare would not be jumped at for Vaudeville or Gymnase? Has Paris as good a young melodramatic and picturesque actor as Mr. William Terriss to be seen anywhere? If so, I should like to know where. Has Paris a good stock of artists of the type of James Fernandez, or Hermann Vezin, or William Farren? Is there one unmannered comedian on the present Parisian stage who could cross swords safely with Charles Wyndham? None in the first-class, indeed! Where, I would ask, are the first-class actors in Paris? Adolphe Dupuis and Coquelin and Got would be hard to match; but are we to be persuaded into pinning our dramatic faith to the mouthing mannered Dupuis of the Variétés, or Baron, or Léonce, or Hyacinthe, or any of the fossils that live by manner. Mr. Johnson wisely omitted all

mention of the ladies, and discreetly enough, no doubt. But if Paris can boast a plethora of Ellen Terrys and Mrs. Kendals, and Nellie Farrens and Kate Phillips's, or such clever novices as Miss Webster, Miss Millward, the Misses Rorke, Rose Norreys, or Dorothy Dene, I wonder very much that they are kept so religiously in the background. Art ought to be catholic, not exclusive. There was a time—and in my memory—when English critics were howled at for thinking there was any merit in Lafont, Regnier, Desclée, or Marie Laurent. I can remember the time when Fechter, the best stage-lover of our time, was called "a d——d Frenchman" and ridiculed because he spoke with an accent. The French journalists are reverting to our insular prejudice of 1863.

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Here is a specimen of modern criticism. A young fellow who is going fast to the devil is suddenly brought into a pure atmosphere and under the influence of a good woman. In his despair and despondency, he describes himself as a "shadow falling across the fields and flowers." Because the actor who interprets the character is not as thin as Sara Bernhardt, the metaphor is ridiculed as preposterous and excessive. The vulgarity of matter-of-fact could not go much further than that, surely. Heaven protect the literary drama from such guides as these! Who can wonder that the honest work of conscientious and imaginative artists is ridiculed by cantankerous disputants in the pit? Who can wonder that our best actors and actresses tremble when they appear on the stage when the chorus of vulgarians, the howl of cheap satire, the discordant jargon of realists, is led by such false prophets as these? When are they to be put down and summarily trampled on?

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Boulogne-sur-Mer is such a favourite resort for persons connected with the dramatic world, be they members of the profession or of the Press, that its doings during the bathing season must be of some interest to the theatre-loving public. The Conseil Municipal have lately reconsidered an unjust decision; since the new management at the Casino, the Théâtre Municipal was only opened for the winter season, which the manager had no option to prolong. For two summers the theatre has, therefore, been closed, except on one or two occasions when touring companies gave a single performance and paid a fixed sum to the town for the hire of the theatre. Winter is not the best harvest time in a watering-place, and it was rather hard on the manager to be compelled to close his doors during the bright season. The Conseil have now decided that, for one year at least, the manager will be free to give performances in summer as well as winter, and next season visitors will find the Boulogne Theatre giving performances as in the good old times. At the Casino things have been as uncomfortable as ever since the new management. The gambling was resumed in defiance of the law, which was only enforced

a very short time back, when other Casinos (Dieppe among them, I believe) protested, and declared that they also would set up gambling tables if they were allowed at Boulogne. The management is doing all it can to disgust visitors. At the children's costumed balls one heard nothing but complaints right and left. On one occasion when I was present, people who had come on purpose to see the children could find neither seats nor standing room, while some of the boxes remained empty. It is true these boxes belonged to subscribers, and the box-keeper had no right to dispose of them; but this confirms what I had said before, that subscription to any seat or box for the entire season is quite a mistake in a watering-place (when the accommodation of the house is limited), for at this rate almost the entirety of seats are secured to the inhabitants, while visitors are left out in the cold. As it was, before the end of the ball the boxes had to be thrown open, for the public was waxing wroth. The management has also introduced a "*réglement*," which one cannot but look upon in the light of an imposition. The admission to the Casino is now paid for at the outer gate of the gardens. The simple admission to the Casino and reading-room for the afternoon was one franc, as usual; the admission, including the ball, was two francs. But those who had not made up their minds at the gate, and decided to go into the ball-room as an afterthought, after entering the Casino, when they tendered their second franc, were told this would not do at all, and they must pay two francs, regardless of what they had given at the gate. If they protested, they were answered rudely that this was the "*réglement*." Indeed, one has generally met with petty annoyances and incivility within the Casino. The bathing arrangements have fortunately been left in the hands of officials of the old *régime*, who have kept up the traditions of civility and attention.

But for the Casino, dear old Boulogne is as charming as ever; the picturesque town, so full of colour and "subjects" for the artist; the broad expanse of sands, daily thronged by the happy children building their fortresses and digging trenches, while the babies air their pink toes with screaming delight; the ladies' summer dresses of all hues and the men's white flannels giving the beach the appearance of having burst out into bloom;—this, one is thankful to say, is not a thing of the past. The fair this year was a very good one, and the "shows" above the average, the best being the Glass-Spinner and the Théâtre Marcketti. Only two touring companies visited Boulogne and appeared at the Théâtre Municipal—Baron, with "Le Fiacre 117," and Achard, with "Martyre." Achard was very good as Sir Elie Drack, and M. Rameau made a first-rate Robert Burell; but Mdlle. Pazza wouldn't compare with Mrs. Kendal. In the part of Paulette I saw, for the first time, a young actress from the Porte-St.-Martin, Mdlle. Henriette Becker. This young lady eclipsed all by her admirable acting; pretty and interesting, she has the fire

and genius of a true artist, and should do great things if she goes on as she has begun. In the course of an interesting lecture on scientific inventions, given here by M. Edm. Lambert-Thiboust, *L'Ignifuge* was experimented most successfully. The most conclusive test was this: A lady came on the stage clad in a muslin dress, which had been dipped in the *ignifuge* down to her feet, but the long train of which had been left in its natural state. This was set on fire and burned fiercely, but, as soon as it reached the part that had been dipped, the flames went out. *L'Ignifuge* should be welcomed by all ladies on the stage.

The Princes' Hall, Piccadilly, is now occupied by Mr. Charles Du Val, who, in the space of two hours, amply verifies the truth that "one man in his time plays many parts." Gifted with a clear and sonorous voice and considerable powers of elocution, as is evinced by his delivery of "The Bells" and "Shamus O'Brien," he has mobile features and eyes that twinkle and lend themselves readily to the humorous skits he presents of every-day life. Crusty and peppery old Indians officers, languid mashers, Irish laundresses, and drawing-room belles, jockeys and racing swells, prosiest of professors, and "broths of bhoys," the monologist assumes them all, fitting to many of them his own appropriate songs, which he sings with spirit and expression, and changes his voice to suit the character as rapidly and as well as he does the costume that befits his representation. Amusing as a "showman," he is a most genial companion and "raconteur" off the boards, and recalls his experiences when among the Boers and gold and diamond seekers, of visits to Eastern potentates and wealthy and indolent planters. If his forthcoming "Punkah Waftings" are but as amusing and truthful as his "With a Show through Southern Africa," a most readable book is in store for us; for Mr. Du Val, though apparently only skimming the surface of society and its doings, forms a rapid and shrewd judgment, of which he presents a realistic, if humorous, picture.

Our correspondent in "marvellous Melbourne" writes:—"'His Natural Life,' Mr. Geo. Leitch's clever adaptation of a well-known Australian novel, by an Australian author, was played to four weeks' good business at the Theatre Royal. Mr. Geo. Leitch has written for himself a good low-comedy part, the Reverend Josiah Meekin, and was the one bright spot in a necessarily sombre drama. A considerable amount of controversy has arisen as to the rights of the author-widow over the adaptation; and a Mr. Inigo Tyrrell Weekes, a minor actor, claims that, as he adapted a drama from the same work, Mr. Leitch is infringing his copyright. An action was brought to test the question, but Mr. Weekes lost the day. I am given to understand that Mr. A. Gatti, who is at present in these colonies, has bought Mr. Weekes' drama with a view to its production at your

Adelphi. A travelling company have played it in a third-rate town, Geelong, but it appears to be only a commonplace drama, after all. Mr. Alfred Dampier has also made an adaption of the novel, which had a highly-successful run at the Standard Theatre, Sydney. 'The Silver King' was revived for the third time at our Theatre Royal on Saturday, July 24, and is now being played to crowded houses, its popularity being apparently as great as ever. Mr. G. S. Titheradge appears in his old *role* of Wilfred Denver; but Nellie Denver is played this time by a clever young emotional actress, Miss Maggie Knight. Mr. Harry Taylor has been substituted for Mr. Arthur Redwood, as Elijah Coombe, and he falls far short of his predecessor. 'Human Nature' and 'Harbour Lights' are to be the next productions at this house.

"'Falka' was revived at the Opera House on July 3, with Miss Emelie Melville as the heroine. The cast was practically that of the first production. 'Falka' ran until July 17, when 'Nell Gwynne' was produced for the first time in the Australian colonies before a packed house. The principals were distributed as follows:—Nell Gwynne, Miss Emelie Melville; Jessamine, Miss Fanny Liddiard; Rochester, Mr. A. Beaumont; Buckingham, Signor Verdi; and Weazel, Mr. J. Forde. The musical honours of the opera are appropriated by Miss Liddiard, whose solo, 'Tic-Tac,' in the second act, always meets with the only encore. The opera is well mounted and acted, and is drawing good houses. 'Maritana' is to be revived for one week on Saturday week, with a new Australian soprano. 'Carmen' and other favourite operas are spoken of. 'Marie Antoinette,' a powerful historical drama, adapted from the Italian of Giacometti, was produced at the Bijou Theatre on July 10, but it hardly met with the result it deserved. On July 24, it was withdrawn in favour of Mr. Pinero's comedy, 'The Rocket,' which was damned off-hand, and only ran a week. Mr. Wybert Reeve appeared as Chevalier Walkinshaw. 'Fédora' was revived on July 31, but it gives way next Saturday to another Italian adaptation—a comedy, under the title of 'Diana.' The Nugget Theatre has been sinking very low in the theatrical scale, and the last company who held it, the 'Anglo-Statue' Minstrels—observe the coinage of the name—closed up suddenly last week, and probably left for parts remote.

"A variety company, bearing the euphemistic title of 'The Swinging Beauties Minstrel Company,' are in occupation of the Victoria Hall; while St. George's Hall remains closed, awaiting the enterprising speculator who may have money to lose. The Apollo Hall is now termed the Empire Coffee Music Hall, and variety performances of a highly-flavoured — not to say gamy — nature are given in it. Mr. W. H. Wallace, who has only lately returned to these colonies, got into trouble with a policeman after the first night

of 'Falka,' in which he played Tancred. He alleges that while on his way home, at 3 a.m., a constable named Patterson assaulted him in a violent and unprovoked manner. He took out a summons; and, *mirabile dictu*, the policeman was proved in the wrong, and fined 40s. and costs. Miss Annette Ivanova sued Mr. Moore, the manager of the 'Falka' opera season at the Opera House, for salary, on the sudden termination of the season, and recovered it. Mr. Phillip Day was tendered a benefit at the Theatre Royal on Saturday afternoon, July 10, when he was assisted by a numerous body of his fellow-actors and friends. Mr. William Elton and Miss Young have arrived, and will appear in the new production at our Theatre Royal. Mr. T. B. Moroney, a well-known basso, who went to England some years ago to try his fortune, but who had to return on account of weak health, died on July 2nd of Bright's disease. The Melbourne Liedertafel, of which he was a prominent member, sang 'Eventide' as he was lowered into his grave. Mr. Justin H. McCarthy's adaptation, 'The Candidate,' was produced at the Opera House, Sydney, on July 31, by the excellent comedy company organised by Messrs. Garner, Williamson, and Co. Mr. Harry St. Maur made his first colonial appearance in this piece, and has won golden opinions. Mr. Geo. Leitch produced his drama, 'The Pearl Diver,' at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, on the same date. 'Fun on the Bristol' has had a very successful three months' run at the Gaiety Theatre in the same city, and is now replaced by an original comedy, 'Nap,' written by Messrs. John F. Sheridan and J. A. Meade. A colonial atrocity, entitled 'Voices of the Night,' is the *pièce de résistance* at the Standard Theatre. Mr. Geo. Rignold is concluding a very successful New Zealand tour in Dunedin; he goes next to Brisbane. Our Royal Opera Company are playing the Gilbert and Sullivan operas in Adelaide, the conductor, Mr. Alfred Cellier, being the guest of the Governor. Tasmania is happy in being without a theatrical company of any note in the whole island. Mr. W. J. Holloway is playing Frank Harvey's dramas at the Theatre Royal, Brisbane."

I am confidently informed by those who, full of self-satisfaction and assurance, ought of course to know what they are talking about, that the authors of "Sister Mary" have appropriated the story of that drama from a novel called "Hidden Depths." It is a matter of slight concern to these lively gossippers that the authors of "Sister Mary" have already declared their work to be as original as any play can be original in these days; that if they had borrowed or stolen from a woman's novel they would have confessed their indebtedness, and that in their estimation a dramatic author, however protected by the law, who steals a plot from a novel, does a distinctly dishonourable thing. All this is immaterial. Given a successful play, and there will ever be a pack of anonymous puppies barking at the heels of the authors of the work. One at least of the authors of "Sister Mary" has never read "Hidden

Depths," nor has he the least inclination to do so; but the author or authoress of that novel finds himself or herself in this dilemma. He or she must be the plagiarist, not the authors of "Sister Mary." The story of "Sister Mary" was contained in a two-act drama written fifteen or sixteen years ago, long before "Hidden Depths" was born or thought of, so we are forced to the conclusion either that "Hidden Depths" emanated from a two-act play buried in a trunk full of papers that never saw the daylight till it was unearthed in 1886, or that Mr. Wilson Barrett, the author of the old two-act drama, by a singular gift of foresight, anticipated a plot that was only invented for a novel sixteen years afterwards.

For my own part, I do not see how it concerns the outside public how a play was written, when it was written, the method of its conception, or the manner of its execution. It is presented with the names of the writers who are responsible for it attached as a guarantee of good faith. That ought to be enough. But when gratuitous and impertinent charges of plagiarism are bandied about and copied into hundreds of papers all over the world, if they remain uncontradicted they may possibly be believed. There exists a lively trade in false news; statements deliberately false are put forward in order that a contradiction may be made or a spurious controversy started. This is one of the cheap tricks of modern journalism. Suffice it, then, to say that, in the spring or summer of last year Mr. Wilson Barrett discovered the skeleton of a two-act drama that he had arranged for his wife, Miss Heath, when acting together in the provinces. It had remained for years buried in a heap of papers saved from the burning of the old Leeds Theatre. In this rough little drama was the germ of the present play "Sister Mary." It is in existence, and anyone can see it who is curious about such matters. It contains the dramatic ideas found in Acts 1 and 3 of "Sister Mary," and was the basis or groundwork of the present play. After due consultation with his collaborator, Mr. Barrett constructed two more acts, and the whole play was rewritten on the reconsidered plan, and to suit a modern comedy audience. How, then, "Sister Mary," dating back from Mr. Wilson Barrett's career as a provincial actor long before he came to London, could have been stolen from a novel that was published a few years ago is one of those mysteries that must be solved by the mendacious paragraphist who put forward a statement as unwarrantable as it was ridiculous. The authors of "Sister Mary" claim no particular originality for a story that is as old as the hills, but they certainly did not require the assistance of any novelist in aiding them to build or write their drama. The worst place to look for a good drama is a modern novel, the feeblest guide to success on the stage is the modern novelist. And it may be remarked that it would have been a more generous thing to formulate this charge before Mr. Wilson Barrett left England for America, and not afterwards.

Another puppy dog must have his bark. Because a few months ago a

drama was written called "Sister Grace," it is instantly assumed that "Sister Mary" is the same play or suggested by the same play without acknowledgment or licence. A more ridiculous and preposterous charge was never made. It had scarcely appeared before Dr. Scott Battams, one of the authors of "Sister Grace," wrote to say that he was not responsible for so frivolous and empty an accusation.

It is quite certain that if the story contained in "Sister Mary" had appeared in any novel, the permission of the author of that novel before dramatising it would have been asked for. It is equally certain that if a play like "Sister Mary" had ever been written before, "Sister Mary" would never have been produced. But life is too short to hunt through the circulating libraries or to endure the tediousness of modern fiction before a play is arranged for the stage that may have a dim affinity to an existing novel.

There is nothing new in the story of "Sister Mary." It may have been told a thousand or ten thousand times. But it has never before been told in this form, and the play such as it is and as it stands, is due to the invention of no one but the authors of it.

Mr. Willard's performance of the leading character in "Jim the Penman" is one of great merit, and will considerably advance him in public reputation as a student of manner and an artist of fine feeling. The part is not a good one: there is no doubt about that. Of all the characters in the play, it is the least satisfactory for the executant. The audience is always waiting for some fine scene in which the forger, Jim, shall be concerned, but it never comes All the actor can do is to convey by facial expression what is passing in the mind of the man who is being hurried by fate to inevitable despair and destruction. From the outset, when justice, law, and the truth encircle Jim the Penman and enmesh him in their inevitable toils, his face is a study of deep interest. It is not the face of a coward, there is no shuffling or wincing, but the pale features, the outstarting eye, the grim determination on the features, tell of a man who has played his last card, but has been trumped by calm and determined fate. It is all up with him. The inevitable has come at last. A few stereotyped smiles may be assumed, a false society air may be put on, but the man on whose face is depicted so much concealed terror is hunted down. He must put his back to the wall now, and fight it out with destiny. No one but an actor of very superior intelligence, no one but an artist of originality and thought can convey these impressions to an audience. Acting is not merely a matter of learning words, and flinging them out at the head of an audience—any parrot can do that. We want brains as well as words. The actor must have lived in the character before he presents itself. A pretty girl may look Juliet, and make a handsome photograph or picture, but she cannot be Juliet unless she can understand or has felt love. No pretty parroting will do for the balcony scene; no simulated fear will do for the potion scene. The most intense study and application are requisite for such dramatic moments as these, but at

the back of them must be the heart to understand, the mind to conceive, the art to execute.

Mr. Willard, who is as fond of portraying the darker shades of human nature as is Mr. Irving himself, is, like that celebrated and brilliant actor, never disappointing when he assumes a new character. He has always something to show. His effects are invariably studied beforehand. He has thought of the man he presents, and lived as that man before he appears on the stage. He leaves nothing to chance, but has carefully disciplined his idea by art. And though the part may not be a showy one, though the opportunities for mere display may be scanty, the impression made on the minds of those who have studied acting in its finer and subtler sense will never be effaced. A performance like that of Mr. Willard as King William in "Clancarty" lingers on the memory when a thousand plays and performances have passed out of the mind. And so will the face of the new "Jim the Penman" haunt those who care to study it. It has been seen in the gambler, desperate, pale, impassive, awful as he glares at the croupiers and flings down his last stake, the gambler over whose shoulder grins the dread demon of fate. It has been seen in the speechless, drowning man who has been swimming desperately against the tide, but suddenly looks up with an agonised expression that says without cowardice that it is all up and death must follow. It is that silent shriek in the face that is more awful and appalling than any words. It is the face of the forger in the dock, whose counsel has used every artifice to secure his release, but who feels with acute conviction that everything is going against him, and sees before his eyes the Portland and the penal servitude that await him when the sentence has gone forth. Written clear on Jim the Penman's brow is the one word "Destiny." Fate is closing, and closing around him. Death stares him in the face!

It is never too late to mend. According to the view taken by my surly and discontented correspondents—there are not very many of them, thank goodness! and they nearly always write me offensive anonymous letters—the editor of this magazine is beyond redemption, and only fit to be the target for their scorn and contempt. I seldom publish the portrait of actor, actress, author, or critic that somebody does not instantly demand to be provided with the picture of a totally different person. It is therefore no easy matter to try and please everybody. Still, notwithstanding the fact that many who have been asked to sit for their pictures have been unable or unwilling to do so, I think that the magazine contains a pretty complete and exhaustive gallery of contemporary theatrical portraits. We have had pictures of actors and actresses in character, and also in their habit as they live, and those who are lucky enough to possess a complete set of The Theatre Magazine can point in after years to their

favourites, and treasure the "counterfeit presentment" of those with whose art they were familiar at this important period of the nineteenth century. Thanks to my good friend, Mr. Herbert Barraud, who has done so much for us in making the magazine popular by his beautiful pictures, we are enabled to publish this month the first of a series of portrait groups in connection with a play now running in London. Mr. Thomas Thorne and the clever ladies and gentlemen of his company have sat in the costumes they wear in Holcroft's fine old play of "The Road to Ruin." Here, therefore, our friends and subscribers gain seven pictures instead of two, and have, besides the familiar portraits, an accurate sketch of costume, that will be valuable for study, and show how an old comedy was revived, played, and dressed in 1886. It will be some time before the stage can boast such careful representatives of Old and Young Dornton as Mr. James Fernandez and Mr. Charles Warner, who enter heartily into the spirit of old comedy, and fill the stage with their exuberant spirits so infectious with any audience. The pretty face of charming Miss Kate Rorke is, of course, to be seen, whilst Mr. Thomas Thorne and his brother will be easily recognised in the characters to which they have devoted so much attention. We start the series with a picture of the characters in a famous old comedy, but arrangements have been made for photographing a group or scene from London's last modern success, "The Run of Luck," at Drury Lane—thanks to the energy and kindness of the popular manager, Mr. Augustus Harris. This picture we hope to publish in our November number, and it is believed that the new departure will be appreciated by all who have so steadily and generously supported The Theatre in times of anxiety and disappointment such as few existing periodicals have encountered.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from August 23 to September 24, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

LONDON:

Aug. 28 "A Run of Luck," a new and original sporting drama, in five acts, by Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris. Drury Lane Theatre.

Sept. 2* "Macbeth," Shakespeare's tragedy. Olympic Theatre.

,, 11 "Sister Mary," a play, in four acts, by Wilson Barrett and Clement Scott. Comedy Theatre. (First time in London).

,, 14 "Curiosity" farcical comedy, in three acts, by Joseph Derrick. Vaudeville Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.).

,, 18 "Harvest," new and original play, in a prologue and three acts, by H. Hamilton. Princess's Theatre.

PROVINCES:

Aug. 30 "Glamour," comic opera, in three acts, by H. B. Farnie and Alfred Murray, music by Wm. M. Hutchinson. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

,, ,, "Vetah," new and original Indian comic opera, in three acts, by Kate Santley, music arranged by Jacobi. Theatre Royal, Portsmouth.

Sept. 10 "One of Them," farcical comedy, in two acts, by C. Haddon Chambers. Theatre Royal, Margate.

,, 17 "The Churchwarden," farce, in three acts, adapted from the German of Rudolf Kneisel. Theatre Royal, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

PARIS:

Aug. 24* "Jaguarita l'Indienne," a comic opera, in three acts and five tableaux, words by MM. de Saint Georges and de Leuven, music by M. F. Halévy. Château d'Eau.

,, 26 "La Miniature," comedy in one act, by MM. Charles Clairville and Ernest Depret. Gymnase.

,, 28* "Martyre!" drama in five acts, by MM. Adolphe d'Ennery and E. Tarbé. Ambigu.

,, 30* "Charles VII. chez ses Grands Vassaux," comedy in verse in five acts, by A. Dumas. Odéon.

,, 30 "Stances à Chevreuil," a poem by M. Emile Guiard. Odéon.

,, 30* "Le Fiacre 117," comedy in three acts, by MM. Emile de Najac and Albert Millaud. Variétés.

Sept. 1* "Le Barbier de Seville," comic opera, by Rossini. Opéra-Comique.

,, 1* "Le Nouveau Seigneur du Village," comic opera, by Boieldieu. Opéra Comique.

,, 1 "Le Singe d'une Nuit d'été," an operette in one act, words by M. Edouard Noël, music by M. Gaston Serpette. Bouffes-Parisiens.

,, 2* "A Woman's Won't," and "Love on Crutches," by the Daly Company. Vaudeville.

,, 2 "La Gueuse," a drama, in three acts and eight tableaux, by M. Georges Japy. Château d'Eau.

,, 3* "A Night Off," by the Daly Company. Vaudeville.

,, 3* "Un Troupier qui suit les Bonnes," a comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Clairville, Mercier, and Léon Morand. Cluny.

,, 4* "Nancy and Co." and "The Country Girl," by the Daly Company. Vaudeville.

,, 4 "Fla-Fla," a comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by M. Gaston Hirsch; music by M. Hervé. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 4* "Le Supplice de Tantale," a comedy by MM. Duvert and Lauzanne. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 5* "Don Juan; ou, le Festin de Pierre," comedy by Molière. Odéon.

,, 7 "Briguedondaine," a *revue*, in a prologue and four acts, by MM. Paul Ferrier, Gaston Jollivet, Charles Clairville, and Ernest Depré. Palais Royal.

,, 8* "Horace," tragedy in five acts, by Corneille. Odéon.

,, 8* "La Fausse Agnès," comedy in one act, by Molière. Odéon.

,, 8* "Les Aventures de M. de Crac," a féerie in four acts and twenty-five tableaux, by MM. Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché. Châtelet.

,, 8* "Nos Députés en Robe de Chambre," comedy in three acts, by M. Paul Ferrier. Renaissance.

,, 9* "Bamboche," vaudeville, in four acts, by MM. Vast Ricouard and Ch. de Trogoff. Déjazet.

,, 9 "Eulalie," vaudeville, in one act, by M. Paul Darasse. Déjazet.

,, 10* "La Partie de Chasse de Henri IV.," comedy in three acts, by M. Collé. Odéon.

,, 12* "Louis XI.," drama in four acts, by M. Casimir Delavigne. Odéon.

,, 13* "Andromaque," tragedy, in five acts, by Racine. Théâtre Français.

,, 13* "Les Plaideurs," comedy in verse, in three acts, by Racine. Théâtre Français.

,, 15* "Les Champairol," drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by M. Auguste Fraisse. Château d'Eau.

,, 17 "Le Sous-Préfet," comedy, in one act, by M. Albin Valabrègue. Menus-Plaisirs.

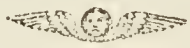
,, 17* "L'Homme de Paille," comedy, in three acts, by M. Albin Valabrègue. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 18 "Il n'y a plus d'Enfants," ballet-pantomime, in one act, by Miss Bridges; words by M. Mariotti. Eden.

,, 18 "La Fille mal Gardée," ballet-pantomime, in four acts; music by M. Heurtel. Eden.

,, 18 "La Brasserie," ballet, in one act, by M. Charles Narrey; music by M. Léon Vasseur. Eden.

,, 20 "Gerfaut," comedy, in four acts, by M. Emile Moreau. Vaudeville.



THE THEATRE.

French and English.

By Clement Scott.

When we all heard the other day that Mr. Augustin Daly's Comedy Company from America, so enthusiastically received and welcomed in London on the occasion of its second visit, as well as in the leading provincial towns of England, in Hamburg and in Berlin, had met with strangely discourteous treatment in Paris, it became necessary to turn back to old books, and recall the various conflicts that have taken place between rival cities, notably Paris and London, on the subject of French and English art. It is true that Macready, Helen Faucit, and Charles Mathews were well received and generously treated when they acted in the French capital; but Phelps, John Ryder, Sothern, and many more had a far different tale to tell. The success of Charles Mathews should hardly be taken into consideration, for he played "L'Anglais Timide" in French. It may, therefore, be broadly stated that since Macready played in Paris no English actor or actress has been ever recognised as an artist by the Parisian critics or the public who frequent the theatres. On the plea that the language they spoke was unintelligible, the best actors and actresses of England who have been rash enough to appear on the Parisian stage have been cold-shouldered, and, notwithstanding the generous treatment extended by England to every form of art for the last quarter of a century and more, the gross insult offered to France by England in the year 1848 has not readily been forgotten by our neighbours, whose memories for slights passed upon them and injuries committed are far more retentive than ours.

The younger generation of playgoers remembers well the fraternal feeling of good-will, the almost affectionate expression of sympathy, that was extended towards the players of Paris by London and its inhabitants at the time when the gay city was held captive by the Commune and the doors of the Théâtre Français were closed during the disastrous siege. They can recall, however dimly, that interesting time when Got and Favart, Delaunay and Bressant, Coquelin and Plessy, with all the talented *sociétaires* and *pensionnaires*, were to be seen at the Opéra Comique night after night engaged in the various works of their distinguished *répertoire*, from the comedies of Molière to the poems of Alfred de Musset. They can conjure up the images of Delaunay and Favart in the "Nuit d'Octobre" and "On ne Badine pas avec l'Amour," played with such special distinction on the last night of the engagement, after the complimentary breakfast given to the French artists at the Crystal Palace, under the genial presidency of Lord Dufferin, now Viceroy of India. Since that delightful time the annual visit of the best French actors and actresses has been one of the features of the London summer season. Twice has the Comédie Française visited us in full force. We have seen that famous society, combined or detached, throughout that important period between the fading days of Favart and the declining days of Bernhardt. But, the Comédie Française apart, without setting foot in Paris it has been possible, in a course of years, to become familiar with such varied and special talent as that of Regnier and Lafont, of Lacressonière and Geoffroy, of Ravel and Berton, of Dupuis and Baron and Léonce; without even visiting the Boulevards we have been able to discriminate between Aimée Desclée and Fargueil, and Schneider and Chaumont, and Blanche Pierson and Bartet, and Léonide Leblanc and Pasca, and Granier and Judic, and who shall say how many more of the smaller fry of comic opera representatives who have their little day and disappear? But how few of us there are who, though perfectly familiar with the French play seasons at the old St. James's, at the old Princess's, at the defunct Holborn, at the Opéra Comique, at the Gaiety, and the Royalty, are aware that in the year 1848 one of the most important companies in Paris, that of the Théâtre Historique, came to London to play "Monte Christo" at Drury Lane, and was literally hissed and hooted off

the stage by a body of roughs and enthusiasts, who came fully persuaded that English art would be ruined at once and irretrievably if French plays were ever to be permitted at any theatre save the St. James's, where they were to be graciously tolerated, but there and there alone? Rachel had, it is true, played Phèdre and Adrienne at the St. James's; Devrient had there been permitted to play Hamlet in German; but these performances were for the aristocracy, not for the people, and when one fine day the "National" Drury Lane was to let, when not a soul could make the "white elephant" of London pay, when Shakespeare and Byron combined had spelled something worse than ruin and bankruptcy, when the doors of the national theatre were closed and an innocent French manager and speculator proposed to open old Drury for a few nights purely as a commercial speculation to play "Monte Christo" in French, there arose such an uproar and hubbub in literary and dramatic London as had never been heard before. Drury Lane might be let for a circus, a concert, or a conjurer, but for the purpose of producing French plays never. Literary London was up in arms, and it is amusing after so long a lapse of time to note the names of the prominent belligerents. The protectionists, or good old conservative defenders of the drama from this insidious foreign attack, were, amongst others, Charles Kean, Benjamin Webster, Charles Mathews, J. B. Buckstone—the last three of whom earned the best part of their living from appropriating and playing in French plays without contributing one farthing for the privilege—W. Farren, Harley, Wright, Meadows, old Granby—who recently died in Dublin—Paul Bedford, Frank Matthews, Leigh Murray, Roxby, O. Smith, Creswick, and Mr. Howe, now acting—and long life to him—at the Lyceum. Opposed to them as the chief defendants of dramatic liberty and fair play were Albert Smith, Dion Boucicault, Charles Lamb Kenney, and the concert-giver Jullien.

The situation at the commencement of hostilities is accurately given in the "Life of Charles Mathews," by Charles Dickens, who prints the authentic documents circulated by either party at the time, and appends, from "The Times" newspaper, a description of the disgraceful scene enacted at Drury Lane, when M. Hostein, of the Théâtre Historique in Paris, announced a public performance in French of "Monte Christo"

The riot which took place on the 12th of June, 1848, on the

attempted production of "Monte Christo"* by the company of the Théâtre Historique, was one of the most serious, and one of the least justifiable, that ever occurred in the history of the English stage. Every effort had been made for days before to excite a feeling of animosity against the French players. Every artful appeal to the narrow-mindedness of the most narrow-minded among the public and the profession had been industriously circulated before the opening of the theatre. It was understood that a careful organisation existed with the object of crushing the audacious foreigners once for all, and of effectually preventing any further attempt to interfere with native talent. A specimen of the literature of this campaign will show the sort of argument which was used on the protectionist side of the question, and which men of eminence and position were not ashamed in some measure to endorse by their subsequent acts :

"Britons, Stand By the British Drama !

and help to restore it to its pristine health and vigour. Shall the land that gave birth to that wonder of the world, Shakespeare, be remembered for its dramatic excellence in the era only of Elizabeth? Shall the Theatres Royal (?) Drury Lane and Covent Garden, erected and patented for the British drama, be the means of crushing it by being devoted to Italian effeminacy and French immorality? Is our native drama, like Mary Queen of Scots, to be lost by modern David Rizzios? How is art in British acting and writing to be cultivated and encouraged if their temples are thus to pervert the taste of the public from what is English? And these theatres will never be let to English speculators on moderate terms (witness the treatment Macready experienced from the proprietors of both), while grasping music-mongering foreigners can be found to outbid them. Let the foreigners keep to their strongholds, Her Majesty's Italian Theatre in the Haymarket, and the royal patronised French theatre in St. James's, and welcome. Let this very historique troop act to the latter theatre on those nights not applied to the Palais Royal troop, and their reception will be all they could desire; but do not let them invade the most sacred domain of the British author and actor. What would those identical French actors say if their grand Théâtre Français, at Paris, became the arena for horse riders and Coburg melodramas? But in France reciprocity with Englishmen is hopeless; not so their feeling towards Italians, Germans, and Spaniards. The ever-varying *Times*, in most pitying and pitiful style, would, as usual, mislead the public by implying that the demonstration is against *all* foreigners, instead of truly stating that it is only against their occupation of our national theatres, and to confine their exuberance within its naturalised sphere of alienated English hearts. As for those un-English small fry of our venal part of the Press, Albert Smith, Boucicault (the acting-manager, by-the-bye, of this French company), Kenney, and Co., whose slimy wanderings may sometimes be traced even in the most respectable of newspapers; who suck Frenchmen's brains through a quill, and void the diluted matter forth as specimens of British society and manners—consign their immoral plagiarisms to the flame, and let it be the funeral pile of their ephemeral fame! But who, after all, has headed and aided

* "Monte Christo" might, one would think, have been left to its fate. It was described as a grand drama in ten acts and eleven tableaux, occupying two evenings in the performance.

this desecration? That concert-monster of charlatanism and ingratitude, *soupe* Jullien, who has fattened on English patronage, and blighted pure musical taste by the introduction in orchestras of church-bells, chain-cables, blacksmiths' anvils, blue and red fire, and every species of gag. It is an insult to an enlightened nation like this—an insult to common sense and the age we live in. 'Be liberal, but be just.' "

In reply to this remarkable composition the following handbill was circulated in Drury Lane:

"To the Public.

"An attempt has been made to influence public opinion against the Théâtre Historique by certain unjust and malicious insinuations, which the directors of the theatre feel themselves called upon to refute. The actors of this theatre have not come to London for the purpose of substituting for the English drama their own pieces, or of entering into a competition, more or less lucrative, with the other theatrical establishments of London. Availing themselves of the opportunity afforded by the closing of Drury Lane Theatre—which no English company seemed disposed to reopen—the directors of the Théâtre Historique felt desirous of presenting to a London auditory a few representations of the most celebrated works of MM. Alex. Dumas and Auguste Maquet, in the hope that a public, so alive to the excellencies of literature and the arts, would witness their efforts with curiosity, if not with a favour which it would be their endeavour to merit. The artists of all countries are brethren, and know not the word of nationality. France received, with admiration and enthusiasm, the English *chefs d'œuvre* presented on their stage by those excellent tragedians, Miss Faucit and Mr. Macready. As conscientious, as zealous in the cause of their art—although, perhaps, less talented—the actors of the Théâtre Historique expect from the loyalty and good feeling of a London public the honourable welcome due to honourable exertions."

What the riot itself was like will best be told by the following extract from the "Times":—

It has generally been the pride of Englishman that they are free from those illiberal national prejudices by which most other countries are distinguished. It has been their boast that, although English artistes have been maltreated by foreigners, the English public has made no reprisals. If the Parisians or the Belgians have misconducted themselves, it has been considered a sufficient reason for Englishmen to misconduct themselves likewise. The doctrine is simple. If the foreign artist succeeds in pleasing enough people to enable him to pursue his profession in this Metropolis, it is our custom to allow him to work on; if he fails, we allow him to tumble into oblivion with equal nonchalance.

Such, we thought, was English doctrine, but some score of people, it seems, think otherwise. According to the apparent creed of these individuals, it is a meritorious deed to hiss French actors, simply because they act in French, and to "pre-damn" a French play before the rising of the curtain, on purpose to show that it is neither the dulness nor the immorality of the production that offends them. This new school of "protectionists" assembled last night within the walls of Drury Lane, which was opened for the performance of the play of "Monte Christo," with the company from the Théâtre

Historique of Paris, and got up the most disgraceful exhibition of illiberality that can be conceived. Were we not convinced that the conduct of these persons was regarded with disgust by the better portion of the audience, we should feel ashamed at the prospect of the Drury Lane disturbance being known to the residents of Paris. The "row" we have to record is a stupid "row" not only showing the illiberality of the rioters, but their paucity of invention. In the old "O. P." affair there was some humour. A good joke now and then found its way into the uproar; but here was a long, dull, dismal, dreary display of nationality, which was effective from the mere fact that it was wearisome. The "row" was a "slow," tiresome "row." One could not have conceived so much noise mixed up with a display of soporific character. Fussell would have despised such heavy *tapageurs*. The poor Frenchmen did all they could to conciliate this amiable specimen of the British public. They opened by playing "God Save the Queen," and when, two or three times afterwards, the rioters, who were loyal to a fault on this occasion, demanded a repetition of the anthem, they politely complied with the request. The plan of singing "God Save the Queen," as a signal for uproar, is borrowed from the old "O. P." days, and is another mark of the want of originality which signalised the proceedings of last night. The rioters went on halloaing, hooting, whistling through their whistles, and uttering dull exclamations for upwards of three hours without any reason, and we wonder in what condition their lungs must be at the present moment. M. Jullien, as lessee of the house, attempted to restore order, but not a word of his speech was heard, and the noise pursued its dreary course to the termination of the piece. Some of the "demonstrators" wore their placards, which disfigured their hats, and which recorded something about the want of encouragement to the English drama in Paris. Two or three individuals in the pit thought it the height of humour to put up their umbrellas; but the police deemed it still a better joke to conduct these persons out of the house, which prevented a repetition of the pleasantry. A person in the boxes was going to take off his coat and fight somebody, and thus, probably for the first time in his life, obtained applause. Never did we see a number of persons so busy in attempting to degrade themselves in the eyes of all rational beings. We have reason to think that some of these zealots, more worthy of better exploits than those of last night, were really persons of standing and respectability in the histrionic profession, and these, we are sure, when they rise this morning will look with regret on the stupid scene of yesterday, and take especial care not to let their friends know they were concerned in such an exhibition. At the conclusion of this tedious "riot" the mob repeated their chant of "God Save the Queen," promised to repeat the "row" on Wednesday (to-morrow) night, and gave three groans for Albert Smith. What this gentleman had to do with the affair, or why he incurred his heavy penalty, we do not know; but we should certainly say that under the circumstances three groans were more flattering than three cheers would have been.

It is not surprising that Macready, at this time, by the public votes at all events, at the head of the profession, should have been mortified almost beyond expression at those miserable proceedings. Undertaken avowedly in the interests of the British drama and in the name of Shakespeare himself, the riot at Drury Lane Theatre was as much an insult to the profession as an outrage on public morality, and

Macready was not slow to give expression to his views on the subject. On the 13th of June he wrote as follows to M. Hostein, the manager of the French company, with whom he had previously had an interview, to whom he had expressed, in French, his "concern and indignation at the outrage offered them":—

"Theatre Royal,
"Drury Lane.

"Sir,—I have the greatest pleasure in assuring you of the grateful recollection I entertain, and shall always cherish, of the very flattering reception I met with in Paris on the three several occasions of my making professional visits to that city. Not only on the stage and in society, but from many artists of the various theatres of Paris, I experienced the most gratifying and liberal attentions. It is with equal pain and surprise I have heard of the disreputable proceedings at Drury Lane last night.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
"Your very obedient servant,
"W. C. Macready.

"13th June, 1848.
"A Mons. Hostein."

It might have been supposed that nothing could have been better or more appropriate than this. Macready well knew the absurdity of the reciprocity cry. On three occasions he had appeared in Paris, and had been received with courtesy and kindness, and he was not the man to forget it. No man could more appropriately have expressed what should undoubtedly have been the feeling of the best among the English actors. But this simple matter elicited an almost incomprehensible outburst of excitement and anger—an outburst that would be quite incomprehensible if the personal animosity against Macready, which was very prevalent in the profession, and the extraordinary jealousy with which he was regarded at that time, be not taken into consideration. Mathews, at least, could have no grounds for jealousy, and it is absurd to suppose that a man of his antecedents and education could for one moment have believed in the "reciprocity" idea, or could have countenanced such action as was taken in his name. But somehow Mathews and Macready had always found it difficult to get on together.

The stupidity, if not malevolence, of an inventor and propagator of scandal had carried to Mathews, while he was still at Covent Garden, an absurd story about Macready, on which Mathews's comments were more free than respectful. The vehemence with which Macready took up the cudgels, and the impetuosity with which Mathews accepted the challenge, for a long time obscured the real merits of the case. It was not until reams of paper had been wasted, not until many hard words had been employed on both sides, and a great deal said that could never be quite forgotten, that a little judicious examination into the facts by a cool-headed friend, and the subsequent confession of the original culprit, proved Macready to have been in the right throughout, and the words attributed to him to have been nothing but an infamous invention. Mathews, being in the wrong, frankly owned it, and the breach appeared to have been closed. But later, when Mdme. Vestris and her husband were under the tragedian's management at Drury Lane, there were all sorts of difficulties—refusals on the lady's side to accept the parts allotted to her, fiery championship and outcries against the manager's tyranny from

Mathews. It must have been a happy day for all three when the parting came.

No doubt a morbid recollection of these previous passages was in Mathews' mind when he consented to join the onslaught which was made upon Macready in this matter of the Historique company, and when he allowed his name to be used by Messrs. Hodgson and Burton, solicitors, who were employed to call Macready to account. Why the intervention of solicitors was considered necessary on this occasion it is difficult to see. Perhaps it was because it was felt that a greater share of the responsibility of the extremely strong language that was to be used—and there is no mistake about its strength—would attach to the actual writers than to anybody else, and that whereas that sort of thing would naturally only come into the day's work of a solicitor, it might have serious consequences to others.

Macready's answer sufficiently indicates the tone of the questions addressed to him :—

"20, Wellington Street, Leeds,
June 17, 1848.

"Messrs. Hodgson and Burton,—

"Gentlemen,—Upon my arrival here this evening, your letter was delivered to me.

"You address me, I presume, as solicitors instructed by Messrs. Webster, C. Kean, C. Mathews, Farren, Harley, Buckstone, &c., &c., &c., and numerous other performers to inquire 'whether the words attributed to me by M. Hostein on the occasion of my visit of condolence to him, on what he states I called the disreputable conduct of my own countryman, were actually uttered by me'; and, if so used, you 'ask the names of those members of the profession by whom I was authorised to make such protestation.'

"You will allow me, in the first place, to observe that I do not admit the right of those gentlemen to make such inquiry of me; nor do I understand with what purpose you address those questions to me in their names, for, if not concerned in the disturbances referred to by me, my expressions, whatever they may have been, cannot apply to them; and if, directly or indirectly, implicated in the illegal and unworthy proceedings that took place at Drury Lane Theatre, they rightfully fall under the remarks, however severe, of every lover of order and fair dealing.

"There seems to me, also, no reason why *I* should have been singled out and exceptions taken to *my* observations on a public occurrence, which has been commented upon without reserve both by our daily press and in our Houses of Parliament. In a leading article of Friday's 'Times,' the parties engaged in this opposition are recorded as 'ruffians and blockheads, covering their country with disgrace in the eyes of Europe'; and by the nobleman who spoke upon the petition in the House of Lords, 'the attempt to put down the performances at Drury Lane Theatre' was characterised as 'infamous,' 'barbarous,' 'illiberal,' 'disgusting,' 'discreditable,' &c., &c. These gentlemen certainly strain at a gnat and swallow a camel whilst under such expressions they select *my* words for the object of their special inquisition!

"I will not, however, refuse you the satisfaction you seek. M. Hostein's letter I have not seen, but, if correctly quoted by you, it conveys the full spirit of my conversation with him, though not reported in the precise words I used. I told him that I called on him to express the disgust and indignation which, as an Englishman and

an artist, I felt on reading in that day's journals the disgraceful proceedings of the previous night. I replied to his questions that I remembered with fervent gratitude my receptions in Paris on three several engagements, adding that I deeply sympathised with him, and felt certain that every respectable actor and the better part of my countrymen did the same. This, the sum and substance of what I said, does not at all differ in sentiment from what you have quoted; but it so happened that I did not make any formal 'protest' for myself, nor did I fall into the error of making it in the name of any upon your list, which, had it occurred to me, I might spontaneously have done, under, as it now appears, a mistaken impression in regard to those gentlemen's opinions.

"Your inquiry, I believe, is fully explained; but, though loath to prolong this letter, I think it right to add that I did not know for a certainty that either actors or authors were in combination to carry on those disturbances till so informed by M. Hostein. I was even ignorant of the presentation of Mr. B. Webster's petition; and when it was reported to me from Mr. Arthur Webster that Mr. C. Kean had applied, or was applying, to the Lord Chamberlain against the French actors, I thought I was only doing that gentleman an act of justice in asserting most confidently my disbelief of the rumour. In the same spirit I assured M. Hostein of my firm convictions, giving others credit for what I myself believed, and believed to be right. But you tell me there are 'numerous other members of the profession,' in addition to the list you have given, who disapprove 'the course I have adopted.' You, and perhaps they, will allow me to say, for the sake of that profession, I sincerely and deeply regret it. I am not without hope and belief that there are very many English actors who participate in my sentiments, and who would, without hesitation, adopt the course condemned by your clients.

"I am, gentlemen,

"Your very obedient servant,

"W. C. Macready."

Whatever may have been the judgment of the theatrical profession on the heated arguments, angry accusations, and bitter recriminations to which the unfortunate affair gave rise, there could have been but one opinion among the independent portion of the public as to who was—in principle, at all events—in the right. It is difficult in these times—when it has become common to see London theatres successfully managed by foreigners, when foreign artistes compete with "native talent" in almost every branch of profession, and when the transfer of the whole company of the Théâtre Français to the Gaiety Theatre is taken quite as a matter of course—to understand how Macready's action should have been so misjudged, or how so great a storm could have been raised in so small a tea-cup. The reasons below the surface are not readily intelligible without a clue, but it was a very pretty quarrel as it stood, and even after the letter of June 17 there was an angry correspondence. In the end, Macready, if only from having right on his side at first, certainly had the best of it.

Though exposed to unjust and unmerited insult both from the obstinate protectionists and the leading members of his own profession, Macready behaved with extreme dignity throughout the affair, and thoroughly like a gentleman. The instant he read

in the daily papers the account of the indignity put upon the French artists, without consulting anyone, but actuated alone by his own good feeling and horror of injustice, he put on his hat and walked down to Drury Lane Theatre to express his regret at what had occurred, and his sympathy with the wretched people who had been literally hooted off the stage. In these predicaments there are plenty of kind friends who will apply every motive but the right one to the acts of a public man. Some declared that Macready espoused the cause of the French artists because the Parisians had been civil to him when he played in their capital—which they had. Others insisted that it was policy on the part of the leading actor of England to be civil to the Frenchmen in case he wanted to visit Paris again. But these were not the true reasons. Macready did as he would be done by. He saw in this conspiracy a very silly, undignified, and cowardly proceeding. The inanity of the dramatic protectionists was further shown by their deplorable action in sending Macready a lawyer's letter, in which they put their position in the very feeblest light. Macready had done nothing actionable. His insult to the profession, as it was called, was a mere matter of opinion, and the round robin, signed by Charles Kean and the indignant adaptors of French dramas and farces, would have had just as much weight without the official imprimatur of Messrs. Hodgson and Burton, the solicitors to the disputants. That Macready was not very much affected by the incident one way or the other is shown by the temperate manner in which he dismisses it in his diary. Only two extracts refer to the matter at all, and it is clear that the "Monte Christo" scare did not much trouble him, nor did the action of the Charles Kean and Charles Mathews' party disturb his temper or ruffle the serenity of the attitude he had taken. Macready alludes to the occurrence as follows :—

June 13th.—Looked at paper ; sorry and ashamed to read account of the outrage offered to the French actors last night at Drury Lane Theatre. The manager seemed alarmed at my presence. I told him in French I had called to express my concern and indignation at the outrage offered them last night, &c. They were very grateful, and asked if I had not been content with my reception in Paris. I told them how gratefully I remembered it, and ever should. They asked if I would write a line to that effect. I sat down, and in the midst of their hurried conversation wrote a note to M. Hostein, the director. They were profuse in their acknowledgments, Jullien observing two or three times, "C'est digne de votre caractère." M. Hostein, in great joy, introduced me to two actors as I passed, and they were very grate-

ful and respectful. Called on Henry Taylor; Mrs. H. T. very unwell. Coming home, wrote a corrected note to M. Hostein, requesting him in French to substitute it for that which I had left with him. The Dickens's and Hilliard dined with us. Answer from M. Hostein.

London to Hereford, *June 15th.*—Read the "Times," in which my letter* to M. Hostein appeared, and a further condemnation of the "dull brutality" of the wretched ruffians who so disgraced themselves in last night's disturbance at the theatre. At Swindon saw Wilson, the Scotch melodist; he was open-mouthed above these vile rascals. Talked with dear Katie, who is the most engaging child. God bless her! At Gloucester, I took her to see the cathedral; we could only take a hasty glance at it. Saw another church; showed her the view from the terrace at Ross. Reached Hereford at five, and came to our excellent friends, the Twisses. Found them in good spirits; found Arthur and Godfrey here. Spent a cheerful evening.

Leeds, *June 17th.*—Found at my lodgings letters from Messrs. Hodgson and Burton, I presume solicitors, "inquiring of me—in the names of Messrs. Webster, C. Kean, C. Mathews, Farren, Harley, Buckstone, Wright, Meadows, Granby, P. Bedford, F. Matthews, Leigh Murray, R. Roxley, Hughes, O. Smith, Lambert, Worrett, Creswick, Howe, and numerous other members of the profession who do not concur in the course you have adopted, &c.—whether the words used by you to M. Hostein were actually uttered by me, and the names of the members of the profession who authorised me to protest," &c. Occupied during the evening in making a copy of a reply to these persons.

The vulgar rioters, however, had their way. The Frenchmen tried to get a hearing for two nights and failed completely. "Monte Christo" was never heard at Drury Lane. The national theatre was not polluted by Alexandre Dumas, and a few days afterwards, with the consent of the protectionists, Mr. Mitchell was graciously allowed to open his hospitable doors at the St. James's, and "Monte Christo" was permitted to be played by these deplorable dogs in the manger, who so sulkily and savagely had upheld the rights of the patent and national theatre in the matter of French art. But let us see what the "Sunday Times" of 1848, a noted protection and anti-French organ, says when it sums up the matter in dispute, and sneeringly snuffs out poor "Monte Christo" when acted at the St. James's Theatre:

ST. JAMES'S.

The Drury Lane Troupe.

Those who either did not or *would not* understand the principle of the successful opposition to the French company at Drury Lane

* The letter referred gratefully to the kind reception he had three times enjoyed when acting in Paris, and regretted that similar courtesy was not shown to the French company in London.—Ed.

Theatre insisted that the drama of "Monte Christo" ought to have been heard and judged according to its merits. "The Times" said if it were immoral the Lord Chamberlain had the remedy in his own hands, and should it prove a stupid play it would easily be put down. But the opposition was not based either upon the immorality or stupidity of the play, though both these points were incidentally urged; but upon the *illegal* attempt of a company of French actors to occupy an English national theatre at a time when the principal metropolitan theatres were in the possession of foreigners. Upon this ground we took our stand. Public opinion was with us, and we had the gratification of witnessing the unmistakable expression of that opinion on the two evenings that the foreign artists vainly endeavoured to obtain a hearing on the stage at Drury Lane. Had they been listened to, it would have been a tacit admission to their right to perform, and, this point granted, the opposition would have regenerated from a national to a critical question. The victory achieved, and the defeated company being compelled to march out of the theatrical garrison, they sought and obtained from Mr. Mitchell, the lessee of the St. James's, permission to give on his stage the two performances of "Monte Christo" which they had announced, but not until the following apologetic, deprecatory letter had been written and published in the daily papers by M. Hostein, the director of the *troupe*:—

"M. Le Redacteur,—

"Monsieur,—Je viens en qualité de directeur du Théâtre Historique de Paris exprimer le vif regret d'avoir été la cause involontaire du trouble survenu à Drury Lane, pendant les deux représentations données par nos artistes Mais, si j'avais pu un moment concevoir la pensée que cette opposition avait un caractère de nationalité, mes doutes à cet égard tomberaient d'une manière absolue en presence de l'offre toute amicale qui vient de m'être faite de Mr. Mitchell, directeur du Théâtre Français de St. James, de prêter sans aucun intérêt de speculation sa salle Mercredi et Samedi prochains pour y donner les deux dernières représentations annoncées à Drury Lane, et qui par conséquent n'auront pas lieu sur cette scène. Cette offre cordiale a été accueillée par nous avec cordialité, et nous serons heureux de nous trouver au Théâtre de St. James, comme sur un terrain de conciliation.

"J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

"Votre obeïssant serviteur,

"16, Norfolk Street, Strand. "Hostein.

"Ce 17 Juin."

Recognising the prescriptive right of Mr. Mitchell to represent the French drama at the St. James's Theatre, and having no hostile feeling towards the individuals composing the company of the Théâtre Historique, we rejoiced at the opportunity which the generous offer of Mr. Mitchell afforded the public of testing the quality of the late importations. The excitement and agitation caused by the determined opposition to the company at Drury Lane would, it was thought, bring a crowded audience to the James's, but the reverse was the case, and the house, which was not half filled at any time, began to thin at the end of the second act, and before the curtain had fallen upon the most wearisome and absurd melodrama ever brought upon the stage the audience had dwindled to a very small remnant. All that has been said of the stupidity of "Monte Christo"

falls far short of the truth; the incidents are revolting and absurd, without being redeemed by their originality or dramatic applicability. The dialogue fluctuates between the inanity of pointless conversation and inflated bombast, and the plot, as may be gathered from the following sketch, is of the true Coburg complexion.

That this obstinate prejudice and violent protectionist feeling in the matter of French art was a long time dying out I can myself personally testify. My first appointment as a dramatic critic was on the "Sunday Times," in the year 1862. The paper was edited by its then proprietor, the elder Mr. Seale, a determined, upright, but very severe man. It would have been as much as my place was worth in those days even to mention a French play or to allude to a French actor. The profession that supported the "Sunday Times," one of their weekly organs, would have pounced down upon its proprietor had he dared to encourage, even indirectly, the "wretched foreigners" who were "taking the bread out of the mouths of the English actor." The same opinion was also strictly and conscientiously held by another of my encouraging and kind-hearted editors of early days, Mr. Frederic Ledger, of the "Era," who was a protectionist to the backbone, who was loyal to the profession whose interests he aided in every way, and who was only induced to recognise the interest that attached to Paris and its plays when times changed, and the daily newspapers paved the way for a more generous and liberal state of things. Few who were playgoers at the time can have forgotten the antagonism that greeted Charles Fechter when he dared to act in English, and had the effrontery—as it was called—to study Shakespeare with the view to playing Hamlet, Othello, and Iago. The good old dogs of the Charles Kean party had not lost their fangs. The memories of 1848 were not dead. Pamphleteers such as Mr. Ottley attacked Fechter tooth and nail, and would not listen to the love murmurings of Stella Colas as a Juliet with a French accent.

Mr. John Coleman, who stands midway between the old school and the new, in his "Memoirs of Samuel Phelps," gives many an instance of that secret and intense dislike of Frenchmen and French art that possessed the contemporaries and successors of Macready. Fechter, when he became manager of the Lyceum, engaged both Phelps and Walter Montgomery to assist him in giving the best possible representation of Shakespearean plays. The unexpected success of the "Duke's Motto" almost indefinitely

postponed the promised appearance of Phelps and Montgomery:

"The relations between Fechter and Phelps had become somewhat strained, and they approached a climax during an interview in which the former, after intimating that the next production would be 'Hamlet,' blandly inquired what part Phelps would play in the piece.

"'Why, Hamlet, of course,' he replied.

"'Oh, but I play Hamlet, myself,' responded the Frenchman.

"'The devil you do!' growled Phelps.

"'Yes; so I thought perhaps you would play the Ghost.'

"'You thought that I would play the Ghost to your Hamlet—yours. Well, damn your impudence!'"

Why it should have been impudent on the part of the manager of the Lyceum Theatre to play Hamlet, a part in which he had previously distinguished himself, in preference to Phelps, who never could play Hamlet, it is difficult to see. But this is the story as John Coleman tells it. We shall never, however, get at the truth of theatrical anecdotes. According to Mr. Coleman, Phelps told Fechter to his face that he was impudent, and expressed himself somewhat strongly. The biographers of Samuel Phelps say that he did nothing of the kind. "At last, being tired of paying him for doing nothing," says Mr. W. May Phelps, "and hoping to get rid of him thereby, Fechter asked him to play the Ghost in 'Hamlet'; but this was rather too much even for his good nature, and he gave him a pretty sharp reply *through his acting manager*, and Fechter, in consequence, refused to pay him his salary unless he did what was asked. The matter was at last referred, by mutual consent, to the arbitration of Charles Dickens, who soon gave it in Phelps's favour. But there is a vast difference between insulting a man to his face and reprimanding him through an acting manager. According to the historian Coleman, Phelps did not stop at that. After a convivial meeting at the house of Charles Reade, Fechter is reported to have said of Phelps:

"Ah, Mistare Reade, he is a grand old man and I loafe him like a brother; but, *entre nous*, he cannot play Hamlet.

On the other hand, as he got into his cab, Phelps growled:

"After all, John, he's not a bad fellow for—for a Frenchman, but, by God, he can't act Shakespeare!"

Even John Ryder, according to Mr. Coleman, had his anti-Gallic prejudices, independent of the fact that he and Fechter played

Shakespeare together at the Princess's, alternating the characters of Othello and Iago.

"No," rejoined "Honest Jack" in the vigorous vernacular of which he had always a copious supply on hand; "I've shouted myself hoarse; let the *purpureal* Frenchman try a little shouting on his own hook."

It is to be hoped John Ryder said nothing of the kind.

But the prejudice against French actors in England that had existed from time immemorial gradually declined, and eventually died out. Twenty odd years ago there rose up certain gallant and doughty champions for Free Trade, and many a lance was broken in defence of France. Foremost in the fight were Joseph Knight and Lewis Wingfield, and Herman Merivale and John Clayton, and Palgrave Simpson and J. W. Clarke, of Trinity College, Cambridge, whose name is a "household word" at the A.D.C., an enthusiast who never failed to see a *première* in Paris, although he was one of the editors at a large publishing house on Ludgate Hill. Assisted, among others, by such liberal and generous newspapers as the "Daily Telegraph," the young champions continually and bravely directed public attention to the excellence of French art and the slovenliness of the English theatre, although in doing so they got some ugly knocks from the upholders of the old protectionist school. But the battle was worth fighting now that we see that for the most part acting nowadays is as good, if not better, in London than in Paris. It was not so then.

My Fancy's Queen.

I WILL not say if she be dark or fair,
  Or if her eyes be hazel, black, or blue;
I will not dwell upon her wealth of hair,
  Or on its silken glossiness or hue.
I know not if to other men she seem
  The sweetest woman earth has ever seen,
The incarnation of a poet's dream—
  But this I know; she is my Fancy's Queen.

Be thou for ever blest, propitious day,
  When first I saw her, robed in creamy white.
I sought to speak to her—she would not stay,
  But, like a startled wood-bird, took to flight.
The fairies knew her as she swiftly stept
  Along the forest pathway arched with green,
And from their flower-fastnesses out crept,
  To weave new love-spells for my Fancy's Queen.

I followed hard at heel—she knew it not,
  For never once she turned her lovely face
Nor paused, but onward sped towards the spot
  Whereon were housed her innocence and grace.
I rested not until I learned her name,
  And wooed her—aye, and made her mine, I ween!
And now she is a grave and stately dame;
  But none the less is she my Fancy's Queen.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

Louisa Nisbett.

By Charles Hervey.

In venturing, contrary to my wont, to select an English actress as the subject of the present paper, I feel it incumbent on me to apologise beforehand for all sins of commission or omission, of which I may unintentionally be guilty. Unless a man resemble Sir Boyle Roche's bird, he can hardly be in two places at once; and from 1837 to 1870 my visits to London, although tolerably frequent, were not of sufficiently long duration to permit of my becoming so constant an *habitué* of our metropolitan theatres as I should otherwise have been. But I cannot resist the temptation of recording my recollections of a very charming and attractive woman, supplementing them by whatever particulars, dates, and details I have succeeded in gleaning here, there, and everywhere concerning her, thereby unscrupulously following the example of the vendor of brooms, who ingeniously contrived to undersell his less experienced colleague by stealing them "ready made."

According to the best accredited authorities, Louisa Cranstoun Macnamara was born in 1809; her father, originally an officer in the army during the Peninsular war, having retired from the service in a moment of pique, and run through the little money he had, turned his thoughts to the stage, and, after the usual ups and downs to which beginners are commonly subjected, obtained an engagement in 1819 at Drury Lane, then under the management of Elliston. Mordaunt—for he assumed that name on adopting his new profession—does not seem to have shone as an actor, and after 1820 we hear no more of him. He died in 1835. His daughter Louisa, on the contrary, was at an early age the bread-winner of the family, and displayed a singularly precocious talent in children's parts; it is even asserted that when only ten years old she played Jane Shore on a benefit night at the then Lyceum Theatre, in the Strand.

Her first appearance out of her teens took place at Drury Lane October 16, 1829, as Widow Cheerly, in the "Soldier's Daughter;" and so flattering was the reception she met with that the continuation of her *débuts* as Miss Hardcastle and Lady Teazle followed as a matter of course. In December of the same year Miss Mordaunt was selected as the representative of a leading character in Lord Glengall's "Follies of Fashion," thus alluded to by Mr. Charles Greville in his "Memoirs": "On Friday went to see Lord Glengall's comedy, with a prologue by F. Mills, and an epilogue by Alvanley. It succeeded, though the first two acts went off heavily; not much novelty in it, but the characters well drawn, and some of the situations very good; it amused me very well, and was exceedingly well acted."

For the summer season she went to the Haymarket, where she made the acquaintance of Captain John Alexander Nisbett, whom she married in January, 1831, and seven months later became a widow, her husband having been thrown from a phæton, and killed on the spot. Her claim to his estate being contested, a Chancery suit followed; and, compelled by necessity to resume her profession, she reappeared at Drury Lane in October, 1832, successively performing Rosalind, Beatrice, and other leading characters in comedy. Towards the close of that year her younger sister, Miss Jane Mordaunt, made her *début*, also at Drury Lane, as Agib in "Timour the Tartar"; she was a pretty and ladylike girl, but never aspired to anything beyond minor parts except on one occasion, when her Juliet was a signal failure. In 1834, Mrs. Nisbett "created" Belinda in "Beau Nash" at the Haymarket, and in the ensuing year, after a starring excursion to Liverpool, signed an engagement at the Queen's Theatre, where she was the original representative of Esther, in the "Schoolfellows." There I first saw her, together with Elton, in a version of "Elle est Folle," called the "Delusion," a piece by no means calculated to bring into play her peculiar qualities, the plot lachrymose from beginning to end, hinging on the idea of a madman that he himself is perfectly sane, and that the person really afflicted with a mental disorder is his wife. On the same evening—a benefit night—I heard Braham for the last time as Tom Tug in the "Waterman," a part in which, at all events vocally, he has never been surpassed.

In 1835 our heroine migrated to the Adelphi, where she played

Mabellah in "Doves in a Cage" and Biddy Nutts in Buckstone's "Dream at Sea;" I witnessed her excellent performance of the latter, a part, if I recollect rightly, subsequently taken by Mrs. Stirling. Hammond next secured her for the Strand, where several amusing trifles, notably "Poachers and Petticoats," were mainly indebted for their success to her archness and never-flagging vivacity. It was not, however, until 1837, that she fairly took the town by storm; the production of Sheridan Knowles's "Love Chase" at the Haymarket was an epoch in her career, the part of Constance having been expressly written for her, and so happily inspired as to display to their utmost advantage every charm and fascination she possessed. With a cast including Webster as Wildrake, and Mrs. Glover as the Widow Green, it is not surprising that this excellent comedy enjoyed a run of nearly a hundred nights—no common occurrence in those days—and at once entitled Mrs. Nisbett to rank among the most deservedly popular actresses of her time.

After reaping fresh laurels in the provinces and in Ireland, we find her in 1838 at the Olympic, engaged by the temporary manager Planché, during the absence in America of Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews; in the ensuing year she joined Madame's company at Covent Garden, and appeared on the opening night (September 30) in "Love's Labour Lost." During her stay at this theatre she added greatly to her reputation by her charming performance of Pamela Spreadweasel, in Douglas Jerrold's "Bubbles of the Day," and (March 4, 1841) by her "creation" of Lady Gay Spanker in "London Assurance." In 1842 she played Rosalind at Drury Lane to Macready's Jaques, recorded as follows in the tragedian's diary: "Was called for after the play, and led on Mrs. Nisbett"; and two years later became the wife of Sir William Boothby, her consequent retirement from the stage giving rise to a playful remonstrance, addressed to the *sposo* by Laman Blanchard, two stanzas of which I subjoin:

"NEW YEAR'S ODE."

"*To the winner of St. Nisbett.—Sesaon 1844.*

"For brave Widow *Nisbett* no more may we burn,
As blithe Widow *Nisbett* she flies from the scene;
But let, Sir, oh, let *Widow Cheerley* return,
And her who contrasted with ripe *Widow Green!*

Enclose not the orchard while gathering its fruits,
The garden's your own, Sir, yet spare us some flowers;
Let marriage ne'er pluck up wild mirth by the roots,
The widow is thine—but the actress is ours.

"Who weds a mere beauty dooms dozens to grieve,
Who marries an heiress leaves hundreds undone;
Who bears off an actress (she never took leave)
Deprives a whole city of rational fun.
But farewell the glances and nods of St. Nisbett,
We list for her short ringing laughter in vain;
And yet bereaved London! what think you of this bet?
'A hundred to one we shall see her again!'"

As it happened, the poet was correct in his prediction, for in less than a year after their union Sir William died, and his widow, who was not left so well off as had been expected, was compelled in 1846 once more to resume her profession, and became a leading member of Webster's company at the Haymarket. There she successfully appeared as Lady Teazle, Charlotte in the "Hypocrite," and Katharine in the "Taming of the Shrew;" the last-named character, according to Planché, never having had so perfect a representative since Mrs. Charles Kemble. The same writer in his "Recollections" relates a characteristic anecdote of her, which I think no one will find fault with me for inserting here.

"We were sitting in the Green Room one evening during the performance, chatting and laughing, she having a book in her hand which she had to take on the stage with her in the next scene, when Brindal, a useful member of the company, but not particularly remarkable for wit or humour, came to the door, and, leaning against it in a sentimental manner, drawled out—

'If to her share some female errors fall,
Look in her face—'

He paused. She raised her beautiful eyes to him, and consciously smiled—her smile in anticipation of the well-known complimentary termination of the couplet, when, with a deep sigh, he gravely added,—

'and you *believe* them all!'

The rapid change of that radiant countenance, first to blank surprise and then to fury, as, suiting the action to the look, she

hurled the volume in her hand at the culprit's head—was one of the most amusing sights imaginable. Concentrating the verbal expression of her indignation in the word 'Wretch!' she burst into one of her glorious laughs, too infectious to be resisted even by the contrite offender, who certainly was never, to my knowledge, guilty of anything so good either before or after."

The last time I saw this delightful actress was in February, 1849, in an amateur performance of the "Captain of the Watch" at the Strand Theatre, the only professionals engaged for the piece being herself and her sister Jane. On this occasion the title-part was undertaken by Captain (now Sir Henry) de Bathe, and notwithstanding my recollections of Lafont and Schneider, of Frankfort, I am bound to acknowledge that I have never seen it better done. From this time Mrs. Nisbett's subsequent career is a sealed book to me, nor, for reasons already stated, am I able to give the precise date of her retirement from the stage; all I know with any certainty is that the last months of her life were passed at St. Leonard's, where she died in 1858, after a short illness, in her forty-ninth year.

The above, it will be seen, has no pretension to be a biography, and can merely be regarded as an imperfect sketch, to be filled up hereafter by some more competent hand; it only remains for me to record my own impressions of an actress—for I never saw her out of the theatre—whose very remarkable talent and rare personal beauty are pleasures of memory I would not willingly let die.

Mrs. Nisbett—the old name seems more familiar to me—was unquestionably one of the handsomest brunettes I ever beheld; tall and well shaped, with large lustrous eyes, a most bewitching smile, and a profusion of luxuriant hair which she habitually wore in long flowing ringlets according to the fashion of the day. Her voice was low, sweet, and rich in tone, and her laugh a joyous, ringing peal of music, as irresistible an outburst of melody as ever issued from human throat. I have heard it said that she had a secret preference for sentimental parts, and when on a provincial tour expressly stipulated that her characters should include the "Lady of Lyons," and even Mrs. Haller; but, notwithstanding her undoubted success in "Zarah," I question if a London audience would have endorsed her desertion of Thalia.

We all know that Liston fancied himself born to excel in

tragedy, that Talma in his own estimation was superior to Brunet in Jocrisse, and that Rachel obstinately declined to acknowledge her inferiority as Marinette; such illusions, however, more common than is generally supposed, are mostly of short duration, and in the case of our heroine were exceptionally and sparingly indulged in. Her natural element was comedy, every requisite for which she possessed in an eminent degree; she had a keen sense of humour, tempered by an instinctive grace, and never overstepping the limits of legitimate gaiety, an excellent delivery, and a witchery of fascination of which she and Vestris alone knew the secret. I missed seeing her Lady Teazle, but she was an exquisite Rosalind and a charmingly petulant Katharine; in neither of these, however, nor in any other of the numerous characters sustained by her, did she so triumphantly challenge comparison with the most highly gifted of her contemporaries as in her two original creations of Constance and Lady Gay Spanker, in which, it may be safely asserted, we shall most assuredly never see her like again.

The portraits of Mrs. Nisbett which have come under my notice are five in number, namely, one—by no means flattering—(as Miss Mordaunt) in the "Follies of Fashion," engraved for a theatrical magazine; two in the character of Zarah, one of which appeared in "Cumberland's British Theatre;" a fourth representing her, Madame Vestris, and Mrs. Honey as the "Dramatic Graces;" and, lastly, one by Armytage, published in Mrs. C. Baron Wilson's "Our Actresses," an admirable likeness and a gem of engraving.

"Our Empress Queen!"

A JUBILEE SONG.

SET TO MUSIC BY HENRY RUSSELL.

Victoria! Queen of a nation
  That governs the heart of the world!
Thy Empire of love is the station
  Where Liberty's flag is unfurled.
What son would not die to defend thee,
  Who ruleth our loves and our lives?
The heart of our manhood we send thee;
  The blessing of mothers and wives.

Victoria! Hark to our singing,
  Awake to our Jubilee Song!
At the foot of thy throne we are flinging
  The hearts that have lov'd thee so long.
The children of Time that surround thee,
  The cup of thy joy shall refill,
A maid in thy beauty we found thee;
  As Mother we honour thee still!

Victoria! Name that a nation
  Has written in letters of gold,
Look down from the pride of thy station,
  The wealth thou hast garner'd behold!
It is rarer than jewels or treasure,
  It is pure as the starlight above,
It is richer than gold without measure,
  The hearts of a people who love!

CHORUS.

Victoria! Star of our story!
  Thou light of the days that have been!
We cheer for thy reign and its glory,
  We pray for our Country and Queen!

CLEMENT SCOTT.

An Epitome of the Drama.

By Richard Lee.

———We
That with delight join profit, and endeavour
To build men's minds up fair, and on the stage
Decipher to the life what honours wait
On good and glorious actions, and the shame
That treads upon the heels of vice.
Massinger's Roman Actor.

WITH a pen swift as the pinion whence it grew it is here essayed to give a panoramic purview of the drama *ab ovo ad avem*, throughits meaning, origin, and progress.

"A drama," says Johnson, in a definition plagiarised from Aristotle, "is a poem accommodated to action, in which the action is not related, but represented." Otherwise, a play may be defined as an episode of human life wherein every deed, thought, sentiment, and fancy is an integrating part of all, foregoing and following it, aiding to unfold and advance the story concurrently with the characters through whom it is told.

Freed from the exacting constraint of logical definition, let the reader escape with me untrammelled to the traditionally famous springhead of the drama.

To reach this classic source the imagination must take wing into Attica: the period, 2300 years ago; the scene, a vintage harvest-home. The rustic games are over. The Greek youths and maidens dance around a votive altar, whereon a goat is sacrificed to Bacchus, while the grateful Greeks chaunt jubilant choral hymns to the god of wine. As repetition is the parent of order, the recurrence of this rite induces method in its observance by means of a trained chorus, speedily supplemented by a second or responding chorus, sustaining with the first lyric dialogues termed Dorian Dithyrambics, which were again augmented by the Ionian Rhapsodists—minstrels who chaunted Epic poems. Thespis has the credit of thus uniting the choral ode with the heroic narrative.

At length, in the fulness of time, "like to Minerva from the brain of Jove," up rose Promethean Æschylus, the creator out of these rude chaotic elements of tragedy, so-called from *tragos*, the goat sacrificed at the Dionysic festival. All the considerations of the primal dramatist were vast, Titanic as the mental might, capable of conceiving and evolving the dramatic idea. His characters were mainly gods and heroes, from which he seldom stooped; his attributes majesty and terror. He gave their most intellectual and ennobling amusement to mankind during the pristine vigour of Greek liberty, after its triumphal struggles at Marathon and Salamis; proud of his nation, and worthy to live in that golden age of Pericles. Three decades later came Sophocles—less stern, more human, more sympathetic, piety and moral grandeur being the distinguishing traits of his work which worthily reflected himself. Justly did he merit his lofty privilege, to be the contemporary and friend of the inspired Socrates.

Thirty years after Sophocles wrote "Euripides"; sophistical in his sententious worldly wisdom as compared with his predecessors; occasionally grand, often commonplace. Of these three, the *Patres conscripti* of the drama, imperishable monuments remain, in the "Agamemnon," "Electra," "Eumenides," "Prometheus Vinctus;" in "Ajax," "Antigone," and "Ædipus Coloneus;" in "Medea" and "Phædra," or "Hypolitus." Adapting the legal fiction concerning king-life, it may be justly said that the drama never dies; for the decline of the Tragic heralded the advent of the Comic Muse: Thalia triumphant, with Melpomene crouching at her feet. This fresh dramatic form, founded by Epicharnius the Dorian, came to be known and presently contradistinguished as the Old and New Comedy. The Old Comedy was a mere travestie of tragedy, coarse, virulent, and personal; attacking living public characters under mythical and sometimes real names and guises. It was scarcely redeemed even by the scathing invective and ribald fun of its master—to whose scurrilous gibes, in the "Clouds," Socrates fell a martyr—Aristophanes, founder of burlesque, whose works are the sole surviving exemplifications of the school. Out of the Old Comedy grew the New, which, like our own, was a representation of men, manners, humour, pathos, and mirth, woven into regular stories by Philemon, Dephilus, Apolodorus, and Menander. It is recorded that Aristophanes said of the last and greatest of these:—"O, Life and Menander, which of you two

has imitated the other!" By a fine irony of fact, rebuking the Puritanical Cantwells who, in decrying the drama as a device of the devil, "think they're pious when they're only bilious," the sole extant fragment of the plays written by the father of pure comedy comes down to us enshrined in Scripture as a moral apophthegm quoted from Menader by St. Paul:—"Evil communications corrupt good manners."

Tracking the drama from Ionia along the westward line of civilisation the reader takes his onward flight away to regal Rome, where, toward the close of the second Punic War, were found Plautus with his hearty, sturdy farcical fun, and more keenly polished Terence delighting the denizens of the Eternal City with comedies obviously founded upon, if not adapted, from Greek originals. Simultaneously came Rome's first Tragic Era; born through the minds of Livius Andronicus, Nævius, Ennius, Pacuvius, Atticus, and Seneca. Their pieces, formed, like the Roman Comedy, upon the Greek model, were characterised by more polish but far less vigour than the originals.

Two centuries glide past, and Rome's second tragic period is reached, illumined by the expository genius of Roscius, under whom Cicero himself deigned to study the art of declamation—a remarkable evidence of Rome's greatest actor's exalted perfection, when we consider the egrègious petty-vanity of her most accomplished orator. With these, and the decadence of the empire through luxury and indulgence, declined and finally ended the First Epoch of the Drama in its classic form.

Night came down—a starless night of fourteen centuries—when at length day dawned upon the Second Era of the Drama in its Romantic development, discovering as they swelled forth from the ecclesiastical springs of the miracle plays and mysteries the minor streams of Calderon and Lope de Vega's prettinesses, with their sickening intrigue as the apology for every vice, and their overweening pride of blood and lineage as the sum of all virtue. Yet a brief while and from Marlowe flowed his mighty line, preceding the broad river of our Shakespeare's genius, sweeping onward in its supreme majesty of intellectual and moral might, side by side with the secondary affluents of Massinger, Fletcher, Beaumont, Jonson, Webster, Marston, Decker, Ford, Chapman, Middleton, and Shirley, with their humbler tributaries in the dramatic tide—Heywood, Munday, Greene, Skelton, Peele, Lyly,

Chettle, Drayton, Houghton, Rowley, Field, Daborne, and the rest, all pouring on to form in their confluent unity the wide ocean of the Elizabethan Drama. Shakespeare is a law unto himself as well as to others, forasmuch as from his plays is deduced the code of art by which criticism tests the works of all succeeding dramatists. Tried by this standard, the quality of the great master's contemporaries and competitors may be best appreciated; the dignity, moral purity, and mellow flow of Massinger; the concentrated passion and genial exuberant wit gleaming through the bold and varied characterisations of Fletcher, set to noble action by the constructive skill of Beaumont; the delicate fancy and exquisite rhythm of Ford; the classic rendition, quaint, rare humour, biting irony and subtle delineation of character and period of Ben Jonson; the grim, tragic earnestness of Webster and Marston; the rugged might of Marlowe; the weird picturings of Middleton; the virile grasp of Decker; and the comprehensive originality animating the productions of them all. With a grateful salute to the most wonderful product of genius yet evolved from mankind in a single generation, we pass on. At the close of the same era France welcomed her Corneille, the most illustrious instance recorded of genius on stilts. His "Cid" affirms how noble were its author's tragic powers, also how far nobler they might have been but for the constraining influence of classic precedent which rendered his compositions artificially grand in their magniloquence, but at the cost of natural tenderness and simplicity. Corneille's plays must, nevertheless, be ranked as the masterpieces of French tragedy. Racine, in the next generation, aiming to rival Corneille, became his follower, excelling his master in one quality only—humour, as developed through his single comedy, "Les Plaideurs"; but his pompous tragedy queens should never declaim their jingling alexandrines save in hoop, patch, and powder, perriwig'd half as high as themselves. This passing protest applies with even greater force to the works of Crébillon, which, having all Racine's parade of verbiage, lack the epigrammatic "point" distinguishing his language. Contemporaneous with Crébillon wrote Metastasio, who serves to faintly remind us of Corneille. He and his followers received their impressions at second hand from Art; but there came one among them who drew his inspirations direct from Nature—Molière, France's master dramatist, *par excellence*. How graphically he depicted poor

Human Nature's vanities "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" bears witness; how pungently her affectations, quackeries, and self-delusions "Le Misanthrope" and "Le Malade Imaginaire" show; with what skill her sordid vices and pretentious conceits "L'Avare" and "Les Précieuses Ridicules" declare; while his fearlessness in exposing her rank hypocrisies find their highest exemplification in his masterpiece, "Tartuffe." The creator of French comedy, he may justly be esteemed the keenest and most searching dramatic satirist of the morals and manners of his own times the world has known. Goldoni adapted and followed the great Frenchman's manner, but merely reflected the surface of society, whereas his master subtly shows us its inmost depths and under-currents, the very springs of human action. The Italian scarcely merited the title by which Voltaire—whose didactic plays are the poorest outcome of his censorious genius—so highly distinguishes him—The Molière of Italy. After him came the second great writer of French comedy, Beaumarchais, who, in his marvellous pieces of intrigue, perfected the lessons he learned so well from Lope de Vega and the Spanish school of dramatists. Later than they, indeed almost within the memory of our passing generation, wrote Alfieri, Italy's best dramatic poet; his fierce, passionate, rugged dramas forcibly remind the reader of Marlowe, though not in a way to cause any question of Alfieri's originality. Harking back to our English drama—the sole tragic writers worthy of note (for Dryden survives least as a dramatist) living during and after the Restoration were Otway and Rowe. Embers of the old Elizabethan fire glowed within them while severally composing "Venice Preserved" and the "Fair Penitent," but Otway's "Orphan" too sadly witnesses how genius may be degraded by the influence of an impure age, the same that gave England her dazzling but depraved Comedy of Manners, with Congreve Farquhar, Wycherly, Vanbrugh, Steele, Centlivre, Aphra Behn, and the rest, to form and illustrate it. It is not easy to distinguish which element predominates in the productions of these dramatists: the licentiousness or the wit. Very certain is it that in their plays, flashing like a diamond and no less hard, there exists not a single type of true manhood—one simple honest man or woman. In their cynical rendering of good for evil by reversing the relative positions of right and wrong, these plays typify a period the briliancy of which cannot compensate for its heartlessness. During

the mid years of the last century, Foote, Holcroft, Cibber, and Garrick carried on in their lively comedies, though in a diluted form, the best and worst traditions of the Restoration school, from which they eliminated the fineness of its wit with the foulness of its principles. Against these ethics a reaction too violent to be healthy, illustrating the falsehood of extremes, was set up in the "Poor Gentleman," "John Bull," and other pieces of Cumberland and Murphy, which, with the forced artificiality of their sickly sentimentalism and canting parade of virtue, may be justly summed up as mental emetics. Macklin, in his "Man of the World," and Moore, in his "Gamester," furnished the only correctives of Cumberland and his congeners until Sheridan came to the rescue and exposed their maudlin bathos in that exquisite satire upon the whole school of mock-moralists, Joseph Surface; for so may be interpreted the dramatist's covert purpose in delineating that subtle character. The master wit of a century, since assimilating with his own genius the best elements of the brilliant "Comedy of Manners" in the "School for Scandal," has given us in "The Rivals" a piece no less original than those two simply natural plays of his only worthy competitor, Goldsmith, "She Stoops to Conquer" and "The Good-natured Man." These three dramatic masterpieces mark not only in tone but in treatment a distinct departure from the Restoration comedy; for in them we see humour of incident predominating over mere wit of dialogue. They are valuable, moreover, as faithfully reflecting in the dramatic mirror the period comprised in the close of the last and the opening of the present century.

Bringing the stream of the drama down to our feet, it is seen that since 1800 the stage has been picturesquely occupied by plays which, familiarised by frequent presentation, will be pleasantly recalled by the names of their authors—Goethe, Schiller, Lord Byron, Scribe, Knowles, Victor Hugo, Bulwer, Jerrold, T. W. Robertson, and on a lower platform, Planché, H. J. Byron, and Tom Taylor. The succession to these dramatists who have passed away is worthily continued by Messrs. Wills, W. S. Gilbert, Sardou, Dumas, Feuillet, Boucicault, Westland Marston, Albery, Jones, and Pinero.

Players of the Past.

By Austin Brereton.

VI.—"ROXANA."

Of the tragic actresses who flourished before the appearance of Sarah Siddons, the greatest was Elizabeth Barry. Born in 1658, she was first seen on the theatric boards fifteen years later, and she did not leave the stage until 1710, having originated one hundred and twelve characters in the plays of Dryden, Otway, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Southerne, Cibber, Rowe, and Nat Lee. She was the daughter of Robert Barry, a barrister who raised himself to the rank of colonel and ruined himself financially by providing and maintaining a regiment in support of King Charles. The loyal subject having thus beggared himself, his children were scattered, and Elizabeth found a home with Lady Davenant, a relation of the poet-laureate's. The girl was well educated, and the polish she acquired from mixing in good society was afterwards of inestimable service to her. She was by no means a beauty, but she had a voice which soon attracted attention, and procured her an engagement at Lincoln Inn Fields under the management of Sir William Davenant, in 1673. But, alas! the girl had no ear, and it was found impossible to fit her in the meanest part. Three times was she tried and three times was she rejected. Then, as the story goes, Elizabeth Barry was taken under the protection of the "wicked" Earl of Rochester, who undertook to make her an actress in six months. He taught her the part of the little gipsy, in Mrs. Aphra Behn's comedy of "The Rover," and Isabella in the Earl of Orrery's tragedy, "Mustapha," making her rehearse the latter character no less than thirty times on the stage, and a dozen times in the costume in which she played it. Such extraordinary pains did he take with his pupil that the page was carefully taught to manage her train in such a manner as to give each movement a peculiar grace. On the first night of Mrs. Barry's

appearance in "Mustapha," Charles the Second and the Duke and Duchess of York were present and loud in their praise of the young actress. The Duchess of York was, indeed, moved to make the representative of the Hungarian Queen a present of her wedding costume. In Otway's "Alcibiades" she made a hit, in 1675, and, a year afterwards, played Mrs Lovitt in Sir George Etherege's comedy, "The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter."

Elizabeth Barry made her greatest success in the seasons of 1680-82, when she played Monimia in "The Orphan; or, the Unhappy Marriage" of Otway, Belvidera in the same author's "Venice Preserved," and Isabella in "The Fatal Marriage," of Thomas Southerne. Her acting of these three characters gained her the title of "famous Mrs. Barry." "Alexander the Great; or, the Rival Queens," by Nat Lee, was a play to which Elizabeth Barry gave life. This is probably the best play produced by the "mad poet." The characters are admirably contrasted in it: the mild and secure Statira with the disappointed, haughty, malicious Roxana, and the steady Clytus with the fiery Alexander. It also contains some passages of great beauty and lofty imagination, although it is frequently extravagant and bombastic. The play succeeded when it was first acted, but it remained for Mrs. Barry to bring out to the full the character of Roxana. On her first entrance in the part, she made a success where others had failed. Roxana, tortured with jealousy, gives vent to her feelings thus:—

> Madness but meanly represents my toil.
> "Roxana and Statira!" They are names
> That must for ever jar; eternal discord,
> Fury, revenge, and indignation,
> Tear my swol'n breast, make way for fire and tempest.
> My brain is burst, debate and reason quench'd.
> The steam is up, and my hot, bleeding heart
> Splits with the rack.

The actress was enveloped with the fire and passion of the speech, and was secure in the favour of the audience from the moment of its delivery. When Roxana meets Statira, and insults her about the loss of Alexander, a peculiar, cold, malicious smile was visible on the face of the actress, and this, again, was changed to one of infinite softness when Roxana takes Alexander by the hand, saying:—

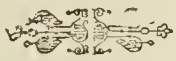
> Now for a last look.
> And that the memory of Roxana's wrongs
> May be for ever printed on your mind.

The rival stage queens were also rivals in private life. One night, when Mrs. Barry was playing Roxana, her Statira was Mrs. Boutel, who generally acted the innocent young heroines. Statira had been favoured by the property master with a handsome veil, which so excited Roxana that she took advantage of a mimic scene to plunge her dagger with all her force into the body of Statira. Happily, only a scratch was the result of this act, but the town was provided with a very neat bit of scandal, it being affirmed that Mrs. Boutel had weaned Lord Rochester from the affection he held for Mrs. Barry.

In addition to those parts already enumerated, Mrs. Barry excelled as the tragic heroines of Nat Lee's "Theodosius" and Dryden's "Cleomenes." In his preface to the latter play Dryden says: "Mrs. Barry, always excellent, has in this tragedy excelled herself and gained a reputation beyond any woman I have ever seen in the theatre." Colley Cibber also praises her acting in this part, and goes on to say that in characters of greatness she "had a presence of elevated dignity; her mien and motion superb and gracefully majestic; her voice full, clear, and strong, so that no violence of passion could be too much for her; and when distress or tenderness possessed her she subsided into the most affecting melody and softness. In the art of exciting pity she had a power beyond all the actresses I have yet seen, or what your imagination can conceive." Of these excellencies she gave most delightful proofs in nearly all the heroic plays of Dryden and Lee. In scenes of anger or resentment she was impetuous and terrible. Even crabbed old Anthony Aston could find nothing worse to say of her in tragedy beyond that she was "solemn and august," while he admits that in comedy she was "alert, easy, and genteel; pleasant in her face and manner, and filling the stage with a variety of action."

Mrs. Barry's last new part was the heroine in "Phaedra and Hippolytus," a tragedy, by Edmund Smith, brought out at the Haymarket in 1709. Her final appearance on the stage was made on June 13, 1710, when she acted Lady Easy in Cibber's "Careless Husband." Thereafter she retired to the then "pleasant village" of Acton, where she died on November 7, 1713, the cause of her decease being attributed to the bite from a favourite lap-dog, which, unknown to its owner, had been seized with madness. She was buried in the south aisle of Acton church, where the

tablet to her memory described her as belonging to the parish of St. Mary-le-Savoy. In person she was of middle stature, with fine, dark hair, light, expressive eyes, an intellectual forehead, and a weak chin and mouth. Her portrait was painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and copies of it may still be picked up in the old print-shops. She was the first actress to whom a public benefit was given.



Written in Sand.

WHAT was I doing to dream so long
Of your pleading voice in a tender song?
Could I not waken and understand
The touch and thrill of a searching hand?
But so it happened! and thus we met,
I can still remember, if you forget
That night in the past, though faith has flown,
When you left me to think, with my heart alone.

What were you saying, my heart! my heart!
As we clung together, and dared not part?
It will beat for ever whilst life shall last,
That pulse of love from the peaceful past.
But so it happened! and thus we stood
In the moonlit hush of the lonely wood.
I shall ever remember whilst life endures,
How you told me of love, when my heart was yours?

Why am I thinking of life once dear,
As the days close in on the fading year?
The moon still quivers, the stars still shine,
But the heart is another's, that once was mine!
And so it happened! between us twain!
Man's truth is written in sand again;
But no one will know through the long dull years,
How you left me alone, with this pain of tears?

C. S.

October, 1886.

Our Musical-Box.

During the past month I heard very little music, good or bad, but received a great deal of both sorts from various publishing firms. The autumnal flood of so-called novelties—alas, how old and hackneyed full many of them are!—set in with its customary severity early in October, and its waves have surged up to my door, assisted by the Postal authorities, with almost daily regularity. There is an axiom to the effect that "every man knows his own business best," and I suppose that music publishers do not constitute the only exception to the rule thus established. The general public presumably likes the sort of matter they produce in such inordinate quantity; were this not so, they would hardly print and offer it for sale. I am told that a vast amount of it goes to the Colonies, and there finds buyers, our kinsfolk across the ocean being more eager for quantity than quality, so far as their purchase of musical compositions is concerned. From a musician's point of view, it is simply incomprehensible, however, that four-fifths of the songs and pianoforte pieces printed every year in London should obtain publicity at all. I am aware that very few of them ever put a shilling into the pockets of their composers, and that a good many of them are the cause of actual pecuniary outlay and loss to those unfortunate persons; but, admitting all this, their appearance in type with the manifest pretension to being bought and paid for with coin of the realm, is an ever-recurring marvel, for which I am at a loss to account to myself. For they are utterly worthless. People do not deliberately buy bad legs of mutton, or bad boots, or bad tobacco; why, then, should they—not being compelled to do so by any legal statute or moral obligation—buy bad songs? Yet they do—they obviously do—for if they did not, the number of bad songs published annually would not be ten times as great as that of the good songs published, which it unquestionably is. Stranger still, songs of genuine merit are frequently offered by their composers to several publishers in succession, who, one after another, decline to publish them, sometimes alleging that they are "over-done with songs," sometimes that the particular composition submitted to them is "scarcely suitable to the taste of their *clientèle*," sometimes that "their engagements do not permit them to undertake the publication of any more songs at present." What is particularly mortifying to the recipients of these formula is that, a few days after their rejected manuscripts have been returned to them, the publisher who has refused their meritorious ballad or *morceau de Salon* brings out a batch of songs and pieces, one more rubbishing than another, and advertises them in the popular press with all the laudatory adjectives in the dictionary. I feel sure that the majority of music-lovers who, like my-

self, often come into contact with earnest, hardworking young composers as yet unknown to fame, are cognisant of many excellent songs, melodious, agreeable to the ear, and harmonised in a thoroughly workmanlike manner, which have been bandied about from pillar to post by the Peters and Pauls of the publishing trade, invariably finding their way back to their mortified composers, and which are still in manuscript, though from two to five years have elapsed since they were first set down upon paper. All this is discouraging, and the reverse of what it should be. But the publishers are manifestly not as much in fault as the public. They, not unnaturally, will only buy what they can sell; the public conspicuously prefers bad music to good, and therefore is supplied with it *ad infinitum* by the publishers, to the great profit of empirical song-manufacturers, and to the corresponding detriment of many meritorious musicians. *Liberavi animam!* Let me now fulfil my duty to my editor by calling attention to a few of the many new compositions forwarded to me for notice. *Place aux illustres étrangers!*

When I called on Moritz Moszkowski the other day in Berlin he had that very morning received a few specimen copies of a pianoforte arrangement—completed since his return from London—of the *intermezzo* from his first Orchestral Suite (opus 39) which was performed here under his direction with so much success last season. Of these copies (published by Hainauer, of Breslau), he was good enough to give me one, with a brief mention of which I can do no less than head my list of instrumental novelties. The arrangement in question is just what might have been expected from so accomplished a pianist as Moszkowski; brilliant, effective, and convenient to the fingers. It is, indeed, a singularly ingenious "reduction" for the clavichord of the most attractive number in the suite—the orchestration of which, it will be remembered, abounds in subtle combinations of wood and string—and displays the three alternating melodies with remarkable clearness and delicacy. Professional and amateur executants alike will find it a valuable addition to their *répertoire*. From M. Joseph Wieniawski, a brother of the great Polish violinist, and himself an eminent pianist, domiciled for some years past in Brussels, I have received several of his more recent compositions, some of them being works designed and carried out upon a large scale; as, for instance, a trio for Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello, (opus 40), massively constructed on the old classical lines, and teeming with finely finished detail; a somewhat lengthy and supremely difficult "Fantaisie pour deux pianos" (opus 42), exacting an absolute mastery of *technique* from its performers, but of intrinsic quality excellent enough to amply reward them for their trouble in learning it; and a ballad dedicated to Saint-Saëns, which, as it bristles with formidable contrivances for gravelling and discomfiting the expert pianist, must have proved a rare treat to that superb player, who delights in intricacies of execution that drive promising students to grim despair. Less alarming in their difficulty, and therefore more likely to acquire popularity amongst English *dilettanti* are M. Wieniawski's graceful Barcarolle in B flat, melodious and Chopinesque Nocturne in E

minor, still more Chopinesque Mazurka in D major, and "six pièces romantiques," all of which are undeniably clever and musicianly, whilst several of them are genuinely and prettily melodious. Besides all these interesting instrumental works, M. Wieniawski has recently produced a charming and extremely sympathetic song under the title of "Extase" (Schott and Co.) which, with excellent judgment, he has dedicated to that admirable vocalist, Marcella Sembrich. I cordially recommend "Extase," to the better class of drawing-room singer, mezzo-soprano or baritone. It has been carefully, if somewhat laboriously, fitted with English words by Mr. B. F. Wyatt-Smith.

Amongst the recently published pianoforte music of native growth that may be considered especially worthy of favourable mention is a minuet and trio, intituled, "Sunshine," by Mr. Alfred Cellier (Chappell and Co.) instinct with the graceful fancy that generally animates the works of that experienced composer. "Sunshine" is not overweighted with technical difficulties; any amateur pianist can play it who has attained fair executant proficiency, and is gifted with good taste. Another novelty published by the same firm is "The New Club Quadrille," which is no better and no worse than countless manufactured articles of the same class that have gone before it. Its title may possibly recommend it to a few people of fashion, and to a good many of their imitators. Several drawing-room pieces and dances have been brought out during the past month by Mr. Joseph Williams, of 24, Berners Street. Of the *morceaux de salon* the cleverest and prettiest is an "Idée Dansante," by Mr. Percy Reeve. This "Dancing Notion" is bright, crisp, tuneful, and thoroughly musicianly in construction. Mr. Henri Roubier's "Psyche" and "Sarabande" bear new testimony to this gentleman's well-known talent for utilising and modernising themes written by composers who have long since joined the majority. "Psyche" revives the strains of a good old polka-mazurka that was extremely popular about thirty years ago, and the "Sarabande" is a major version of one of Bach's sarabandes, written in a minor mood, and belonging, if I remember aright, to one of the English or French Suites. Mr. A. H. Bonser stands accountant for a "Dance of Sprites," apparently written for the delectation of fleshly and even somewhat ponderous elves. It is, in fact, an ordinary human polka. Mr. Conrad Huber has arranged as a waltz a very pretty song called the "Silver Star," written in four-time by Florian Pascal, and published under his name in the form of a ballad. I believe it to have been sung in the inconceivably inept burlesque "Jack Sheppard" by that accomplished vocalist Miss Wadman. A melodious waltz, "Rosalind," by Miss Eleanor Robertson, ought to be popular—the more so as its title page is adorned by a charming portrait of Mary Anderson in the character of the exiled Duke's daughter.

Messrs. Chappell and Co.'s list of vocal publications for the month of October included two new songs by Signor Paolo Tosti, both of which are tuneful and refined compositions. They are respectively intituled

"O Lady of my Love" and "Love Ties." With regard to the former, Signor Tosti's choice of words has been happy, Mrs. (or Miss) Williams' verses being genuinely poetical. The text of "Love Ties," on the other hand, is utter rubbish. It is a pity that false rhymes, bad grammar, and sentences void of meaning should be associated, however subordinately, with the name of so accomplished a musician and genial a melodist as Signor Tosti. "Had you only known" is an average drawing-room ditty by Messrs. Moul and Bingham—tame, inoffensive, and easy. Two other sets of verses by Mr. Bingham have been set with some spirit by Mr. Roeckel, under the respective titles of "Glory" and "Year by Year." The former, fitted with a broad, vigorous tune, is a mild version of Hood's immortal "Ben Battle"; the latter, somewhat less happily melodised, is a really well-written lyric. Amongst the new vocal music published by Mr. Joseph Williams are four songs by W. Aikin, two of which are deserving of unqualified praise, which is far from being the case with respect to the other two. "Winter Sunshine" is a charming composition; it would be well to correct an amazing error of harmony at present rendering the opening bar of the introductory symphony unplayable—an error for which the composer is obviously not responsible. I cannot speak too favourably of "Night"; the music is simply beautiful. "A Rosary" is commonplace and uninteresting—it offers a strangely disappointing contrast to its companion lays. "The Tide of Fortune," by M. Moorsom and C. A. Trew, is a publisher's mystery—that is to say, from the point of view set forth in the first paragraph of this article. Presumably there is a demand for this class of ditty; if there be, Mr. Williams is more than justified in bringing it out. Mr. Frederic Cowen has the knack of writing exactly the sort of song that is liked and appreciated by British society. He has never proved his mastery of this particular branch of the musical art more conclusively than by his latest three ballads: "Clouds," "I love you too well (the words of both these are by Mr. Bingham, whose fertility is truly surprising), and "The Star of our Love," a pleasant setting of some thoughtful verses by the late Hugh Conway. I incline to prophesy that all the three songs will do well, from a publisher's point of view.

In the second week of October, Madame Marie Roze added a new part to her English *répertoire* at Bristol and Sheffield, where she impersonated Elsa with unqualified success, and was ably supported by Mr. Edward Scovel as Lohengrin. Of the interesting novelties produced at Leeds, I shall say nothing until it shall have been my good fortune to hear them. From the account given of them in "The Daily Telegraph" by the first of living English musical critics, Mr. Joseph Bennett, I gather that they are all deserving of respectful attention, which I am prepared to devote to them whenever they shall be performed in London. It would be strange indeed if Sullivan, Mackenzie, and Dvorák did not produce works eminently worth listening to. Madame Adelina Patti-Nicolini will leave England for the United States early in November, after having

given three farewell concerts. Two admirable sister-pianists, Mdlles. Louise and Jeanne Douste de Fortis, started a fortnight ago for New York, on a starring tour through the Union. I was privileged to hear them play together a few days before they started, and can conscientiously say that they more than justified all the favourable reports of their fine execution, exquisite taste, and keen musical intelligence that had reached me from many quarters before I had the pleasure of listening to their performance. They played together a 4-mains arrangement of Moszkowski's "Aus allen Herren Laender" with unsurpassable spirit and delicacy. and the younger sister, a child of diminutive stature, whose little hands can barely span an octave, astonished me by a rendering of Bach's Chromatic Fantasia which would have done credit to any mature pianist of the first flight. These gifted girls will return to England next May, when they propose to give a short series of pianoforte recitals, which, unless I be much mistaken, will rank among the most interesting events of the 1887 season. Another event, to which the musical public may look forward with confidence—at least so I am told—will be the production of Mr. De Lara's sacred cantata, the words of which have been selected, with the permission of Mr. Edwin Arnold, from that noblest of modern poems, "The Light of Asia." I have heard some of the music of this work, now well advanced towards completion, and have been deeply impressed by its melodic beauty, masterly construction, and striking originality. It will, I believe, take a high station amongst the more remarkable English compositions of the day.

Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

"DOROTHY."

A new and original Comedy Opera, in three acts, by B. C. Stephenson and Alfred Cellier.
Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, on October 2, 1886.

Dorothy Bantam	Miss Marion Hood.	Harry Sherwood	Mr. C. Hayden Coffin.
Lydia Hawthorne	Miss Florence Dysart.	Squire Bantam	Mr. Furneaux Cook.
Phyllis Tuppitt	Miss Florence Lambeth.	John Tuppitt	Mr. Elward Griffin.
Mrs. Privett	Miss Harriet Coveney.	Lurcher	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Lady Betty	Miss Florence Beale.	Tom Strutt	Mr. John Le Hay.
Geoffrey Wilder	Mr. Redfern Hollins.		

"Dorothy," considered as a musical work, is charming throughout. There is not an ugly or tiresome bar in any one of its numbers. From the opening of the excellent overture to the closing phrase of the sparkling finale of Act III., the cheery little opera never once bores its hearers, nor —if I may judge others by myself—ceases to give them pleasure. Every now and anon one of Alfred Cellier's pretty *motivi* reminds people afflicted with musical memories (which, by the way, are apt to cause their owners more annoyance than gratification), of some old familiar strain. But the tune thus recalled is always a pleasing one; and why should we grumble at the composer for "summoning up remembrance of the past" to the session of our thought, so long as that thought be sweet? Mr. Cellier may be cordially felicitated upon the trifles of his borrowing in "Dorothy" as well as upon the more important original matter with which his score teems.

The overture, which opens with an *allegro vivace* movement in the minor mood, and contains a well-chosen *recueil* of the principal melodies in the opera, is cleverly put together and most gracefully orchestrated—as are, indeed, the accompaniments, *intermezzi*, and ballet episodes throughout the work. Every number of Act I. is good—so good as to call for enthusiastic plaudits at the close of each successive solo and concerted piece. A trio, hight "Be wise in time," was loudly redemanded on the occasion of my hearing "Dorothy," and deservedly so, for it is a delightful composition; so is the quartet following it, "We're sorry," which was similarly honoured by a crowded house, as were furthermore the song and trio, "I am the Sheriff's faithful man," and the admirable quartet, "Now swear to be good," preceding a brilliant and effective finale. The song with which the lyrical portion of Act II. opens ("Though born a man of high degree") also obtained an encore; so did the quartet, "One moment, pray," and Mr. Hayden Coffin's interpolated song, "Queen of my Heart," an extremely sympathetic composition. In this act, too, are a lovely part-song for full choir, and a rollicking hunting chorus with a soprano solo ingeniously dovetailed into it, of which I can conscientiously say that nothing as clever, musicianly, and genial of English origin has been heard upon the London lyric stage since the production of "The Mikado." Act III. opens with a gem of a little ballet—music, figures, dresses, dancing, are all perfection—followed by a tuneful ballad, "The time has come," which is nightly re-demanded; and closes with a bright and joyous chorus written in Mr. Cellier's very best manner. "Dorothy" finishes as it begins, melodiously, gaily, and pleasantly to the ear. All music-lovers should go and hear it; to those who rejoice in "concords of sweet sounds" it cannot fail to prove a continual feast.

Before I attended a performance of this fascinating little opera, somebody for whose dramatico-literary opinion I entertain a sincere respect told me that the "book" was a poor one—dull, ponderous, and clumsily constructed. This view of Mr. Stephenson's share in "Dorothy" I cannot endorse. The librettist, as I understand, was severely handicapped in more than one respect with regard to his plot and his lyrics, and on the whole I am of opinion that he has very satisfactorily fulfilled a difficult and ungrateful task. Some of the song-words are considerably above the average of such work, when it has to be fitted to a composer's ready-made music; the dialogue is frequently funny without being vulgar; and the "intrigue" is not more improbable than beseems comic opera, in which nothing is impossible except a logical sequence of ideas or events. Some carping, petty-minded people may insist that it is unusual, not to say intolerable, for a gentleman staying in an English country-house to sing a two-verse love-song at the top of his voice in the hall five minutes after all the other guests have retired to their bedrooms. But I would crave permission to remind such ill-conditioned cavillers that is still more unusual for a distinguished public favourite, the leading baritone of the London comic-opera stage, *not* to sing a song in the course of his nightly impersonation of his part; and that he had far better expose himself to the reproach of waking up the characters in the piece from their first

stage-slumbers than fail to wake up the audience with a ditty that earns a rapturous encore night after night. It being manifestly the common object of Mr. Hayden Coffin and the Gaiety management that he should "appropriate the biscuit" with a charming ballad, quite delightfully sung, what can it possibly matter to his hearers when and where he delivers himself of the song in question? One time and place are as likely as another, if you come to that; for in real life, which one should be grateful to leave behind one when entering a theatre, people don't sing about their feelings and intentions at any hour of the day or night, or in any portion of their own or their friends' dwellings. I hold that, in comic opera, whatever is, is right; and when I heard Mr. Coffin strike up a vigorous stave outside a young lady's bedroom door, for doing which in the sanctity of private life he would either be given in charge or kicked into the street, I was glad; for I delight in his singing, and—in such cases—regard the "unities" with bland indifference.

The performance of "Dorothy" at the Gaiety is of unusually high quality throughout, with the exception of Miss Hood's singing, which is truly unpleasant. This lady's stage appearance is so prepossessing that, by the force of contrast, it absolutely enhances the distress caused to her musical hearers by her harsh voice and false intonation. In the comparatively small vocal part of Lydia Hawthorne Miss Dysart reveals singing and acting talent of great value. This young lady has everything in her favour: a sweet, round, full voice, a correct ear, a manifest sense of humour and no inconsiderable dramatic instinct, besides remarkable personal attractions. The Gaiety *impresa* is to be sincerely congratulated upon having secured her services. Mr. Hollins has a nice little voice, and sings perfectly in tune; he is especially useful in concerted music, which he takes part in with laudable steadiness and good taste. Mr. Williams is quite irresistible in the screaming part of Lurcher, an amatory and ebriate sheriff's officer, whilst Miss Coveney is *on ne peut plus* arch and maturely skittish as Mrs. Privett, the "widow of four." "Dorothy" is exquisitely set and mounted; it has furnished Mr. Charles Harris with an opportunity for covering himself with glory. The chorus-singing is faultless; the orchestra, under Herr Lutz's masterly leading, does its work superbly; the dresses are charming, and worn by exceptionally pretty girls, in the case of the vocal and choregraphic supers. In short, throughout this delightful work, "every prospect pleases." My advice to the readers of THE THEATRE is unreservedly "Go and see it."

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

"LA BÉARNAISE."

A New Comic Opera, from the French of MM. LETERRIER and VANLOO, written by ALFRED MURRAY, composed by ANDRE MESSAGER.
Produced, for the first time in London, at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, October 4, 1886.

Captain Perpignac... ...	Mr. G. H. SNAZELLE.	Antonio...	Miss B. GORDON.
Pomponio...	Mr. J. J. DALLAS.	Carlo	Mr. LEVERETT.
The Duke of Como... ...	Mr. SYDNEY HARCOURT.	Jacquette	Miss FLORENCE St. JOHN.
Cadet...	Mr. C. BOWLAND.	The Countess Bianca...	Miss MARIE TEMPEST.
Grabassou...	Mr. W. CHEESMAN.	Bettina	Miss LINDA VERNER.
Girafo...	Mr. E. J. LONNEN.	Landlady	Miss LESLIE BELL.

If "La Béarnaise" were dependent for its popularity upon the in-

trinsic beauty of M. Messager's music it might run for ever, or at least for a period of time far exceeding that throughout which "Our Boys" held the stage. For nothing so dainty, so tuneful, so surpassingly adroit and delectably fascinating as the score of this opera has come to London from the Continent since "Les Cloches de Corneville" took this metropolis by storm. But the lasting success of a hybrid work in which sung and spoken dialogue alternate is not—in this country—wholly attributable to the high merit of its music, which, unless strongly flavoured with vulgarity, seldom proves so solid an attraction to the pittites and "gods" as does an extravagantly comic text, adroitly fitted to absurd situations aud grotesque "business." The duration of a "run," as every manager knows, is governed by the favour of pit and gallery, rather than of stalls and boxes; wherefore it behoves the *impresarii* of theatres specially affected to the production of comic opera to provide their humbler clients with bright and humorous "books" as well as pretty and taking music. Now the "book" of "La Béarnaise" is not funny; nay more, it is dull—so dull, that if anything could mar the exquisite pleasure every music-lover must derive from listening to the lovely melodies and sweet, subtle instrumentation with which that opera abounds, it would be the stretches of tiresome dialogue intervening between musical numbers so replete with delicate fancy and graceful contrivance that each one in succession appears more charming than its immediate predecessor. In order to secure unalloyed enjoyment whilst listening to "La Béarnaise," perhaps the best thing to do would be to make up one's mind that the dialogue is an unfortunate accident, and pay no attention to it. Some of the lyrics, on the other hand, are well written and by no means devoid of poetical feeling; *e.g.*, "The Two Birds," "Silent Love," "No or Yes," and "I've only one." The verses of these four songs are of much better quality than that to which cotemporary librettists have accustomed us, in relation to compositions of this particular class. The same may be said of the mildly humorous words respectively headed "Tantalisation" and "Cousinly Affection," in both of which Mr. Murray evinces a marked improvement upon his "Gibraltar" lyrics.

About the story of "La Béarnaise" I shall say nothing, save that it is no sillier or more improbable than comic-opera plots have a prescriptive right to be. It has, moreover, been exhaustively told in the columns of all the dailies and weeklies, so that in all probability the readers of THE THEATRE are at least as well acquainted with it as I am. To the value of the music and the excellence of its performance I despair of doing justice within the space-limits of a necessarily brief notice. Until I heard this work M. Messager was unknown to me as a composer; but his talent asserted itself so resolutely in the orchestral preface and introductory chorus that, had I heard nothing more than those two numbers, I should have assigned to their author a very high position amongst musicians of the day. Real organic melodies and masterly harmonies flow with equal freedom from his pen; his instrumentation is full of surprises, frequently quaint but always beautiful; he writes for the voice with perfect taste and

discretion Frankly speaking, every number in "La Béarnaise" is worthy of special laudatory mention. I only venture to point out by name those that seem to me altogether super-excellent. Amongst these are Bianca's song Act I., "Hast thou in the forest mazes," the refrain of Jacquette's lively solo "Although I am a youth bucolic," to which M. Messager has fitted a most ingenious and telling accompaniment; Pomponio's plaint, "You're often round a pastrycook" (Act II.), the clever melody of which is underlaid by another *chef d'œuvre* of harmonisation; the delicious berceuse, "Hush and Sleep," with choral accompaniment, a musical gem of the first water; the trio, "Asleep," written on the lines of grand opera, with a spirit and *maestria* of which Donizetti or Verdi might have been proud; Jacquette's pastoral ditty, "I am a simple village lass," immediately following an admirable chorus displaying at least one entirely novel effect; the orchestral introduction (*tempo di Mazurka*) to Act III. put together with consummate art, somewhat *à la* Bizet; and, finally, the so-called "Drilling Duet," a bright example of genuinely humorous music, the innate fun of which requires no text to convey its comic significance to the audience.

Mr. Bruce has been no less wise than fortunate in securing the services of two such accomplished vocalists as Miss St. John and Miss Tempest for the fine soprani *rôles* created by M. Messager in "La Béarnaise." Miss St. John has certainly never filled a part more suitable to her than that of Jacquette, in which she has once more proved herself to be the first of living comic opera *prime donne* and one of the cleverest comic actresses on any stage. I can pay her no higher compliment than by saying that she vividly reminds me of the Marie Geistinger of twenty years ago, of whose inimitable natural gifts she is the artistic inheritrix. It is always a treat to listen to Miss Tempest's faultless singing, never yet heard to greater advantage than in the grateful *rôle* of Bianca. More than one encore denoted the firmness of the hold this admirable vocalist has established upon public favour. Mr. Snazelle sings well, and looks sufficiently *debonnair* as the "gallant gay Lutherian," Captain Perpignac. The Duke of Como (or Parma; which is it?—the playbill says one and the book of words the other!) is cleverly impersonated by Mr. Harcourt whose careful study of chronic infirmity deserves cordial recognition; a good deal of conventional buffoonery, welcome to the groundlings, is cheerfully rendered by Messrs. Dallas and Bowland, in the characters of Pomponio and Cadet; whilst Mr. Lonnen provokes repeated bursts of laughter by converting a Chief Commissioner of Comoesqe (or Parmesan) Police into a Jack Pudding of the obsolete Richardsonian pattern. The orchestra, led by Mr. Slaughter, does its work featly and sympathetically; so do the chorus singers, whose *crescendi* and *diminuendi* leave nothing to be desired in the way of effectiveness. Of the scenery, dresses, appointments, and stage-management I can only speak in terms of unqualified praise. For general picturesqueness and special felicity, with relation to colour combinations, the opening *tableau* of Act III. may fearlessly challenge past and present competition. Within my remembrance, no

prettier scene has been set upon the stage of comic or any other sort of opera. "La Béarnaise" is a shining and well-deserved success. I prognosticate that its public life will be a long and merry one, and I hope that M. Messager will soon let his English admirers hear from him again.

WILLIAM BEATTY-KINGSTON.

"INDIANA."

Opera Comique, in three acts, by FARNIE and AUDRAN.
Produced, for the first time in London, at the Avenue Theatre, October 11, 1886.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:—

Mat o' the Mill	Mr. A. ROBERTS.	Indiana Greyfaunt	Miss WADMAN.
Lord Dayrell	Mr. CHARLES RYLEY.	Nan	Miss M. DUGGAN.
Philip Jervaulx	Mr. HELMSLEY.	Lady Prue	Miss P. BROUGHTON.
Sir M. Mullit	Mr. H. ASHLEY.		

Although the plot of "Indiana" is not remarkably interesting, whilst the dialogue and lyrics are decidedly weak, this unpretending little work will probably draw a good many remunerative audiences to the Avenue Theatre, for the following reasons. In the first place, the piece is beautifully put on the stage and dressed with excellent taste. Secondly, it is effectively cast, our first fantastic comedian and our leading "grotesque"—Messrs. Ashley and Roberts—both figuring conspicuously in its list of "great attractions," and the title-*rôle* being brilliantly sustained by that able actress, and accomplished songstress, Miss Wadman. Thirdly, the music of "Indiana," though far from being up to the mark of "La Mascotte," into which delightful operetta M. Audran put all the best musical ideas that have heretofore suggested themselves to him, is pretty and catching, here and there rising to merit considerably above the average; it has the advantage, moreover, of being played and sung throughout by an intelligently led orchestra, and by competent vocalists. If, as appears to be believed by some experienced theatre-goers, "Indiana" be unmistakably funnier than her immediate rivals "Dorothy" and "La Béarnaise," that advantage must not be attributed to the author of the libretto, but to the humorous gentlemen entrusted with the leading comic parts, who have liberally strengthened these latter with their own particular jokes and catchwords, everyone of which appears to tell; whereas the jests of the original dialogue display a settled tendency to fall flat. It has been lucky for one or two of the pieces in which Mr. Roberts has recently played that his capacity for "gagging" is practically unlimited, and that his quaint funniments exactly suit the public taste. His ready wit and thorough command of the resources of a peculiar vein of humour certainly saved "Lurline" from disastrous failure, and have probably been the chief agents in establishing the success of "Indiana." I have heard Mr. Roberts—very erroneously, in my opinion—stigmatised as a vulgar buffoon, whose *vis comicæ* is of the same order as that of a circus clown, expressing itself in facial contortions and senseless sayings, such as "Allsopp, two with you!"—a recondite observation, the sparkling *esprit* of which custom, apparently, cannot stale. To my mind, Mr. Roberts is an extremely clever actor and comic singer, amongst whose many natural gifts is the highly valuable one of instinctively knowing what the public will laugh at. With this commodity he lavishly supplies

the audiences of "Indiana" night after night; and everybody interested in the fortunes of that opera ought to be deeply grateful to him for doing so.

Pretty and lively numbers abound in M. Audran's score, the prevailing character of which, as I have already pointed out, is mediocrity. The overture is nought. In Act I. there is a cheery song about Adam and Eve, with the burden of "Cherchez la femme," followed by a still cheerier lay "The Hospital Bride, alias, Poor Young Thing!" The words of this latter deserve special attention, by reason of their frank cynicism. A waltz intituled "Love will guide" (the *motivo* of which crops up more than once in subsequent portions of the opera) is tuneful and taking; its key is agreeably and ingeniously varied; Miss Wadman sings it admirably. Bright and chirpy, too, is the quintet, "Ah! let us see." Act II. opens with a clever patter-chorus of alternate female and male voices, hight "Skirts are fuller," but, in other respects, is musically weaker than its predecessor. The rustic ditty which figures as its most important number, and is afterwards utilised for the finales of both Acts II. and III., is a feeble imitation of the robust old English glee (I cannot remember its name) that winds up with "Humphrey with his flail, and Dorothy Draggle-tail." Obviously, the composer thinks particularly well of this tune; but it is not strong enough to do what is expected of it. "There at the dreamy hour" is a brief but really pretty duet for mezzo-soprano and baritone, with words the poetical feeling of which, unrestrained by grammatical fetters, seems to point to the probability that they have been written by some anonymous author. Act III. has one graceful and fanciful air, "Oh, Sunny South," with banjo obbligato, and one brisk bustling song and chorus, full of go, "Open the shutters wide"; the rest is leather and prunella.

Although "Indiana," from a musical as well as a literary point of view, leaves a good deal to be desired, I entertain no manner of doubt that it will run through the winter months with profit to its joint authors. It is just the sort of entertainment which "society" delights in, and our gilded youth may be counted upon to patronise it. As, after all, it is exceedingly well sung and played, acted and danced, mounted and set, dressed and stage-managed, I, for one, am not restrained by any scruple worth mentioning from recommending my fellow-creatures in quest of post-prandial amusement to lend their countenance for an evening to "Indiana." *Verb. sat sap.*

Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

Our Play-Box.

A family farce, a new and original farce, and a comedietta.

"A HAPPY DAY."

"A Family Farce," by RICHARD HENRY.
Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, on Wednesday, October 6, 1886.

Jerrymer Jawkins	Mr. ARTHUR WILLIAMS.	Ethelburga	Miss ROSE SILVESTER.
Mrs. Jawkins	Miss HARRIET COVENEY.	Ethelinda	Miss FLORENCE SILVESTER.
Angelina	Miss FLORENCE BEALE.	Montmorency ...	Master S. BISHOP.
Sophonisba	Miss TERRISS.	Montague	Master W. ANTLIFFE.
Edwin	Mr. B. P. SEARE.	Montgomery	Master S. WATSON.
Newton	Mr. J. LE HAY.		

Out of a simple, homely story, the author of "A Happy Day" has produced a distinctly pleasant and humorous farce, called most appropriately a family one. One laughs at the picture of Jerrymer Jawkins as he struggles with his seven children prepatory to taking them all to spend a happy day at Rosherville Gardens, because the little accidents that fall so thick and fast are naturally amusing, and are free from any touch of vulgarity or exaggeration. It has long been owned that it is necessary to keep the early comers to theatres in good temper before giving them the principal attraction of the evening, and this being so Mr. "Richard Henry" has abundantly fulfilled the conditions, and has the satisfaction of knowing that he has succeeded in producing a diverting *lever de rideau* so ingenuously and serenely translated by one critic as "raising a laugh." The plot of "A Happy Day" is certainly not involved, and though it deals with the dangerous subject of dynamite it, of course, ends comfortably. The rows and scrimmages, fights and tears of the Jawkins' offspring as they perform their toilets requisite to starting forth are distinctly funny; and the sketch of the loquacious father, whose hands are as busy as his tongue, who ties Ethelburga's sash while he scolds his weeping Angelina, adjusts Montmorency's boots while he unwillingly spars with his wife on the anniversary of their wedding-day, is as well drawn as it is well acted by Mr. Arthur Williams. How at last all is settled, the roll-call answered, the start made and the happy day suddenly threatened with the blackest of black clouds, must all be seen to be appreciated. Up to this point everything has run on smoothly, but here the author should either use his scissors or alter his sheriff's officer, for the laughter dies away and the farce drags a little. But when the black box so mysteriously alluded to as dynamite turns out to be but a case of harmless butterflies, the seditious song a cheery ditty, and the unwelcome intruder is unceremoniously shown

the door, all goes well again, and the curtain falls on deserved and hearty applause. The acting, except in the case of Mr. Arthur Williams, who is excellent, and Miss Florence Beale, who is really funny, does notcall for much notice.

"MY LORD IN LIVERY."

A new and original farce, by S. Theyre Smith.

Produced at the Princess's Theatre, on Saturday, October 9, 1886.

Lord Thirlmere	Mr. Wilfred Draycott.	Sybil Amberley...	Miss Edith Chester.
Spiggott	Mr. Stewart Dawson.	Laura...	Miss Grace Arnold.
Hopkins...	Mr. H. Charles.	Rose	Miss Emily Calhaem.
Robert	Master Cooper.		

It may be the fault of the stage-manager or of the author, but the fact remains that the new and original farce called "My Lord in Livery" is distinctly vulgar and deplorably dull. The incident of a young lady of the house masquerading as a servant is as old as the hills, and notwithstanding that in this case three girls become three domestics and indulge in the usual improbable blunders, considered traditional under such circumstances, their efforts are neither amusing nor interesting, and their extraordinary gymnastic attitudes make one imagine that, like a crab, we have gone backwards, and are seeing a perverted pantomime of "Patience." Extravagant acting is not a necessary essential to a farce, and the parts of the butler (with a catchword about his figure), so unlike any head domestic in a responsible household, and the three young ladies with their wild gesticulations and their over-emphasised readings of tiny parts, become not only annoying but tiresome. In this bewildering atmosphere of flops and shrieks the easy, natural bearing of Lord Thirlmere in the person of Mr. Wilfred Draycott is positively refreshing, for he knows how to give point to his lines, and yet to steer clear of all vulgarity; in fact, to play in a farce and yet remain a gentleman. "My Lord in Livery" hangs on a fragile thread. It tells of the proposed intention and bet of a young naval peer, to win a ring from the hand of Sybil Amberley, the said ring being put there by a messmate, Miss Amberley's cousin. Of course, a new footman is presented to Sybil and her companions (who have been warned of the bet), disguised as Lord Thirlmere, they having taken advantage of their knowledge to dress themselves up respectively as cook, housemaid, and lady's maid. The real Hopkins not unnaturally imagines that he has taken service in a lunatic asylum from the extraordinary antics that follow on this, and consents most willingly to sell his place to Lord Thirlmere for half an hour in return for a ten-pound note. The rest is simplicity itself. The young sailor manages to secure the ring from Sybil, who, with her companions, is gulled into believing Lord Thirlmere to be one of a party of burglars, and after discovering the mistake, and returning the ring with an apology, the

curtain drops on this slight sketch, which entails so much unnecessary hard work to all concerned, with the exception of Mr. Draycott, Mr. H. Charles, and Master Cooper, leaving them breathless with their exertions, which may provoke some to laughter, but cannot fail to depress the many. That the stage of the Princess's is very large we grant, and delicate touches might or might not be lost on the audience, but in justice to the author, who has done such good work as "Uncle's Will" and "A Happy Pair," the stage-manager should check the exuberant spirits of Mr. Stewart Dawson and the three young ladies before they go much further.

"THE NETTLE."

A new comedietta, by ERNEST WARREN.
Produced at the Court Theatre, on Wednesday, October 13, 1886.

Dulcie Meredith ... ... Miss CUDMORE. | Guy Charlton... ... ... Mr. F. KERR.

Duologues must necessarily run on the same lines, therefore it is not surprising that in "The Nettle"—a new comedietta that now precedes Mr. Pinero's "Schoolmistress" at the Court Theatre—we should immediately be introduced to two young people who, not having had the slightest knowledge of one another previously, fraternise so warmly that they quarrel with all the warmth of old acquaintances, indulge in sharp, rude repartee that it is to be hoped is rare outside a duologue, and, lastly, end up by plighting a hasty and somewhat injudicious troth. Mr. Warren's comedietta is worth seeing on account of the acting. In the part of the irate young man, who flourishes his whip and vows vengeance on a hapless writer for a smart article that he thinks refers to himself, Mr. F. Kerr is downright good. He takes as much trouble with this small part as though it were the finest ever written; his comedy is quite of the modern school, but there is a neatness and a finish about it that is delightful. Miss Cudmore brings her pretty face and fresh manner to bear upon the ingenuous maiden who tries hard to entertain her brother's supposed capitalist, for whom she mistakes Guy Charlton, the irate young man. There is a charming earnestness about Miss Cudmore, but she must be warned against allowing her voice to grow monotonous, a fault too common with the young actresses of the day, and also against the trick of twisting and gesticulating with her mouth when she wishes to express emotion. The Court management is proverbial for its care and attention, therefore it goes without saying that Mr. Warren's unpretentious little piece is as well rehearsed and as well staged as though it were a new three-act comedy calculated to run a full three hundred nights. It is a very harmless "nettle," and owes any smart or sting it possesses to the brisk, pleasant acting of Mr. Kerr and Miss Cudmore.

E.R.

"THE HOBBY-HORSE."

An original comedy, in three acts, by A. W. Pinero.
Produced at the St. James's Theatre, on Saturday, October 23, 1886.

Rev. Noel Brice	Mr. Herbert Waring.	Hewett	Mr. Albert Sims.
Mr. Spencer Jermyn ...	Mr. Hare.	Tiny Landon	Master Reed.
Mr. Pinching	Mr. C. W. Somerset.	Mrs. Spencer Jermyn ...	Mrs. Kendal.
Mr. Shattock	Mr. Mackintosh.	Mrs. Porcher	Mrs. Gaston Murray.
Mr. Pews	Mr. Hendrie.	Miss Moxon	Mrs. B. Tree.
Mr. Lyman	Mr. W. M. Cathcart.	Bertha	Miss Webster.
Mr. Moulter	Mr. Thomas.	Mrs. Landon	Miss B. Huntley.
Tom Clark	Mr. Fuller Mellish.		

Mr. Pinero is as fortunate as he is indispensable. It would seem as though the public were destined to have its "only dramatist," just as in another department (less amusing) it can rely upon its "only general." Like that eminent person, Mr. Pinero is safe and workmanlike, with a profound knowledge of his craft—and is there, always to be depended upon. He enjoys much popularity—evidenced on the first night of "The Hobby-Horse" by bursts of enjoyment which greeted what our author himself must confess were but modest and unpretending quips; indeed, with some enthusiasts it was sufficient to have the air of making a joke, though the words were not distinctly heard. Messrs. Sims and Pettitt are writers of a somewhat transpontine cast, and draw huge audiences, and thus the playgoer is left to these two *chefs*, and must choose from the dishes they prepare. On this occasion there has been a miscalculation, and possibly a dainty meant for admirers of "The Schoolmistress" or "The Magistrate" has been served at a table where the guests are accustomed to something more substantial. There were all the symptoms of a *succès forcé*, but there was an instinct that the enjoyment was forced; while, from good nature and respect, some truly staggering incidents—such as the squire's own wife, perfectly recognisable through a thin veil, attending him to the train disguised as a lady companion—were accepted without question or disapprobation. The St. James's Theatre and its excellent company is fitted for matter of more pith and moment. "The Hobby-Horse" is the story of a philanthropic lady, diverted from her proper duties by a fancy for looking after waifs and strays. She leaves her husband on an expedition to the East End, and takes a situation in a curate's family, where various adventures and complications occur, and is finally restored to her original position and to a more sensible view of human nature. Mr. Pinero has dealt with this subject in his usual lively style, and, it must be said, had the play been the work of Sheridan, it could not have been more enjoyed by the audience. There is one truly humorous situation in the second act, where the amiable curate is offered the post of chaplain to a Home for Decayed Jockeys, actually founded by the lady's husband. He dictates a letter indignantly spurning the offer, but Mrs. Jermyn contrives to write another accepting it in warm and grateful terms. A really droll position is caused by his bewilderment when the founder of the Home, having received the letter, heartily

congratulates him on his "liberal views." But to bring about this situation many contrivances had to be adopted. The curate was seized with a pain in his arm, and thus was compelled to depend on an amanuensis, or—as they might say in a burlesque—a womanuensis. Then, to allow his lady to write her letter, the curate mysteriously drops asleep. There is something crude in such devices. At the close of the second act there is a happy touch of comedy, when, as the curate is declaring his love to Mrs. Jermyn (the philanthropic lady), to her surprise and annoyance there suddenly enters her husband, whom we might expect to be finely sarcastic on this development of her philantrophy. Instead, the lady crouches down and escapes, and a general gathering of the characters is supplied instead. The first was surely the natural situation, and I have no doubt was expected by the audience. Another weak place was the undue development of two broken-down and most unsavoury racing characters, introduced at the opening, which were elaborated with extraordinary success and minuteness by Mr. Mackintosh and Mr. Hendrie, and to the delight of the audience, whose appetite was whetted for coming good things, reckoning naturally that they would turn out to be important personages. But they proved to have no influence on the action, and only reappeared at the close. Mrs. Kendal had, of course, the leading part. She is, by consent, the most finished of all our actresses; she can touch the stops of all the emotions, and with masterly effect. In the higher humour of comedy she is delightful; but in the jocularities of Criterion farce—in consequence of her excellence in the other direction—she is scarcely at home. That excellent actor, Mr. Hare—our best delineator of "crusty" parts—was presumed to be passionately devoted to racing and "sport"; yet, somehow, it was because he seemed to *say* so, and reiterate it, and it was hard to believe he was a genuine sportsman. This was a weakness in the composition of the drama and no fault of the actor. There is a jocund air and tone about Mr. Hare that is always irresistible. He seems to grow more mellow with every year—to ripen, as it were. Mrs. Kendal is scarcely suited in her part, which is too farcical for her. It was evidently intended by the author that a moral lesson should be offered as to the folly of ladies adopting children *à la* Mrs. Weldon; but somehow we do not take her *penchant* seriously, and her clandestine expedition—to work at St. Jacob's-in-the-East (a happy title)—had rather the air of a Criterion escapade than of a lady devoted to good works. The other performers laboured with creditable energy to give due effect to their characters. "The clergyman" has now become a regular stage type, whether in a comic or serious aspect: the former represented by the Rev. R. Spalding, of "Private Secretary" memory; the latter by the amiable, good-looking, and well-dressed pastor, who is rewarded with some good girl at the end of the piece. Such is the Rev. Noel Brice, played with much impressiveness by Mr. Waring. Mrs. Beerbohm-Tree is a truly sympathetic actress—

happiest of histrionic gifts—and wins interest, by her bearing even. She has a pleasant tone of comedy, and can "play" a lover vivaciously. That sound, well-trained performer, Mrs. Gaston Murray, was a rector's wife of the Proudie type, but somewhat over-emphasised the tyrannical element. A person of her nature has a consciousness of power, which prompts her to conceal her odiousness, and makes her to be coldly polite. Mr. Mellish, as an obstreperous lover, and Miss Webster, were excellent, and won the favour of the audience, as did Mr. Somerset as a stolid solicitor. This new comedy has been dealt with very candidly by the critics, who object reasonably to the uncertain "key" in which the piece is written, which is now farcical and now serious.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

Our Omnibus-Box.

I have to thank the leading members of the company at Drury Lane Theatre for the trouble they have taken in sitting for the picture of the characters in "A Run of Luck" that forms the second of the picture group series that is published in the magazine this month. Our readers and subscribers also will thank them for their unselfishness, for they will be able to turn back in after years and see our actors and actresses as they dressed and looked in one of the most famous and popular dramas of the day. What would not old playgoers give for some such picture of the artists they reverenced in their youth, and to be able to refer immediately to some play or scene that fascinated them when "all the world was young"? Think what pleasure it would be to possess a scene from the original performance of "London Assurance," now forty-five years old; how we should like to have preserved sketches from the Adelphi "Colleen Bawn" and the Princess's "Arrah-na-Pogue"; how valuable would be photographs permanently secured of Kate Terry and Henry Neville in old Olympic days; of Miss Bateman in "Leah"; of Benjamin Webster in the "Dead Heart"; of Miss Herbert's company at the St. James's when Irving first joined it; and, perhaps most interesting of all, a scene from the orignal cast of "Society" or "Caste" at the little Prince of Wales's Theatre, when the bijou playhouse first became famous under the Bancrofts, and Robertson gained his fame. Disagreeable and tedious it must be, no doubt, to have an appointment with the photographer in the early morning, with its necessity of changing dress and wasting precious time. Next to a visit to the dentist's, this of all things is the most irksome.

But posterity will thank them all for it when the pages of THE THEATRE are revisited, and the old playgoer will point out the

characters to a still younger generation, with some such comments as these: "Ah, that is gentle and highly intellectual Alma Murray, with her nervous temperament and her keen artistic sense; she is the daughter of Leigh Murray, one of the most refined and accomplished actors of his time. She flourished, alas! in an age when the poetical drama was a little under a cloud, but learned societies and enthusiastic literary men caught at her and availed themselves eagerly of her unquestionable talent. She it was who played Constance in Browning's 'In a Balcony' for the Browning Society; she it was who was perhaps the only Beatrice Cenci we shall ever see, for the Islington experiment by the Shelley Society will probably never be repeated. Up on that bookshelf, my boy, you will find a bound copy of the green-covered acting edition of Shelley's 'Cenci,' which caused such a scandal at the time. It is valuable now, and I would not part with it for anything. Next to Alma Murray is handsome Sophie Eyre. She always reminds me of Rose Coghlan, the gifted actress who left London just as she was distinguishing herself, and devoted her talent to America. How charmingly Rose Coghlan played years ago at the Holborn Theatre, when John Clayton produced 'All for Her,' and sent away every audience in tears. Sophie Eyre, who owed her early enthusiasm to the valuable assistance and sincere friendship of Charles Reade, was also very popular in America, and is a splendid figure on any stage. The tall, bluff fellow with the white moustache is William Rignold, brother of George Rignold, who as Henry the Fifth made all the young ladies in America head over ears in love with him. An excellent actor was George Rignold and extremely popular at the Queen's Theatre in Long Acre in the days of 'Amos Clarke,' by Watts Phillips, and 'Cromwell,' by Bates Richards. But America and Australia stole George Rignold from England. His brother William is a 'fine figure of a man,' is he not? He was splendid as the brutal, hectoring, handsome brother in 'The Two Orphans,' the best probably that we shall ever see, and amongst other desirable qualifications 'he plays on the fiddle like an angel.'

The funny little man on the floor is Harry Nicholls, the popular favourite of Drury Lane. No pantomime or drama is complete without him. He never forces his fun or throws it at the heads of the audience, as too many low comedians do, but is generally admired for his dry, quaintly humorous and incisive style. The young fellow holding Alma Murray's hand is J. G. Grahame, a manly actor of the Henry Neville school, who speaks wells, bears himself gallantly, and is a model melodramatic hero. A very useful and always interesting actor, he made his first strong melodramatic success in a Spanish play, 'The Woman and the Law,' in which he became an immense favourite in the provinces. On the left-hand side of the picture is young Gardiner, who made his first strong success in 'A Run of Luck,' and was then considered one of the

most promising of the younger school of actors." "But where is Augustus Harris?" "Everywhere. But not in this picture, because he does not happen to act in this particular play. He has enough to do in directing the fortunes of his successful drama, in selecting and rehearsing country companies, and in preparing for certain approval his popular pantomimes." "A successful man Augustus Harris?" "And deservedly so, for he is the best manager that Drury Lane ever had. He has got a head on his shoulders, and the true meaning of his 'proverbial good luck' is 'common sense.' His industry and energy are remarkable, and such a man would have succeeded in any large business requiring tact and discrimination in the direction of a multitude of interests."

Good news for the lovers of sound, sweet, and popular pantomime music. When Boxing-Night comes round, we shall see at his old place, presiding over Drury Lane orchestra, that accomplished musician, Ferdinand Wallerstein, who has been tempted from his lovely home in the Austrian Tyrol to aid the gallery boys in exercising their lungs over popular melodies. Dear me! that familiar name of Ferdinand Wallerstein takes me back into the pleasant paths of long ago. I recall days at the old Strand Theatre when Frank Talfoued was writing burlesques and we boys were always playing truant from school to see them. I recall days at the Haymarket, "Consule Bucky," when Wallerstein's orchestra discoursed sweet music. I recall the St. James's Theatre, when the fair and beautiful Miss Herbert was manageress, and delighting the town with her fine rendering of "Lady Audley's Secret." Dear old Mrs. Frank Matthews was in the cast, the very soul of humour; and so was the inimitable Frank, who played Luke Marks, if I mistake not. There was a celebrated exit from the village public-house, and I can hear the voices as if it were yesterday—"Good-night, Luke!" "Good-night!" each in a different tone and key. And Ada Dyas; how excellent she was as the pale-faced, haunted-looking woman. And then the days when Kate Terry suddenly came to the front one night when Miss Herbert was ill, and played the principal, and not the subordinate, in "Friends or Foes." And then, later on, when Charles Mathews and "Mrs. Charley" were the stars of the St. James's; days of Arthur Sketchley's "Dark Cloud" and "How Will They Get Out of It?" and Palgrave Simpson's "Sibylla; or, Step by Step"; days when there suddenly came into notice an earnest actor with a sad face—an actor who, as Rawdon Scudamore in "Hunted Down," was talked of in artistic and literary circles as a surprisingly clever fellow, an actor who was, after a rough and weary pilgrimage, destined to become the greatest of his time—Henry Irving. These were the plays, these the careers, these the actors and actresses of the past that Ferdinand Wallerstein watched, and whose memories, I feel certain, he keeps in warm esteem. Wallerstein was not one of the

"pump-handle" order of conductors. He did not take a seat in the orchestra to exhibit a shirt front and diamond studs. He was useful and ornamental as well—at least, the ladies said so. He understood music and his musicians understood him. When occasion required, and it was very often, he gallantly took up his violin and led his merry men as Strauss used to do in a Viennese orchestra.

The "Life and Life Work of Samuel Phelps," amongst other things, is quite remarkable for its elaborate extracts from the London, provincial, and even suburban Press, on the acknowledged excellence of this fine old actor. Never was opinion of biographers more strongly fortified by contemporary criticism. John Oxenford, E. L. Blanchard, F. Guest, Tomlins, Bayle Bernard, Stirling Coyne, John Hollingshead, Jonas Levy, and who shall say how many more, are called into court as emphasizing the current opinion of the time as to the remarkable merit of Phelps as an actor. There is no limit to the variety of the extracts. Apart from London and provincial newspapers, we have quotations from the Liverpool "Porcupine" and the "Islington Gazette." It would seem as if Phelps lay special stress on journalistic opinion, and kept an accurate record of what was said of him. But no. According to his biographers, who placard these criticisms, he was the last man in the wide world to be influenced by them. He did not even read them. All actors say that, and yet they somehow know by intuition every word and syllable that is written for or against them. Listen, then, to what Mr. Phelps' biographers say about his "attitude towards the Press." "He kept the entire Press at arm's length during his management. Whatever was written of him was unbiassed by friendship, and in no way influenced by him. He never invited one of the critics to his house, or met them elsewhere. *He rarely read any of their remarks*, saying that he had perfect confidence in his own judgment, and never did anything without first having duly considered and well weighed it in his own mind: and that what he did lay between him and the public at large, and not between him and any clique of critics, however pretentious and clever."

How curiously theatrical history is written. We all know the oft-quoted epigammatic phrase with which the late Mr. F. B. Chatterton, when lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, excused himself for producing Boucicault's "Formosa" on the boards of the "national theatre": "Shakespeare spells ruin and Byron bankruptcy." The words—probably written by Charles Lamb Kenney or Andrew Halliday—appeared in print in the year 1868 at the close of the long series o Shakesperean and other performances, including Lord Byron's "Manfred" and Bayle Bernard's beautiful version of Goethe's "Faust." The manager of Drury Lane Theatre, who was responsible for rent and salaries, emphatically declared that the poetical drama, so far as Drury Lane was concerned, did not pay. Let us turn, then, to the

"Life of Samuel Phelps," and see what his biographers have to say on the subject. Having described the difference of Phelps with Fechter, who engaged the celebrated actor, but never allowed him to act, we read as follows :—"As soon as his name was taken out of the Lyceum bills he had four offers made him, amongst them one from Falconer and Chatterton, who were then lessees and managers of Drury Lane. His nephew advised him strongly to enter into arrangements with them; and this time—the second in his life that he ever took the advice of anyone—he followed it, and the result proved the correctness of his adviser's views, for he was seven years the main prop of that establishment. Although he had then been before the London public for very nearly thirty years, he was so popular that he drew, we believe, as many people to that theatre during those seven years as Edmund Kean did the first seven years he appeared in London. Early in October, 1863, Lord Byron's "Manfred" was produced under his direction *with immense success, and had a long run.*" How Byron then could have "spelled bankruptcy" if "Manfred," by Lord Byron, when produced by Chatterton—the putter-forth of the immortal phrase—was an immense success and had a long run is one of those mysteries that probably will never be solved. There was one other play by Lord Byron, produced by Chatterton at Drury Lane in 1867—Byron's "Marino Faliero," under the title of "The Doge of Venice." This also, according to the biographers of Phelps, was another very successful and great performance on his part. And yet in 1868 we find Boucicault's "Formosa" and Halliday's "Fortunes of Nigel" instead of Shakespeare and Byron.

Only a few weeks since, in an account of this year's pastoral play of "Fair Rosamond," cordial and well-deserved praise was given to Mr. E. W. Godwin for the sympathetic skill with which he had adapted it from Lord Tennyson's historical play of "Becket." Not long after that, the news was received of his sudden death on the 6th of October, after a protracted and painful illness, under which a less ardent and courageous nature would have succumbed many months earlier. He died at the early age of fifty-two, the victim of an internal disease, which from time to time during some years past had caused him extreme suffering. He leaves some pleasant memories to his friends, by whom his death is sincerely mourned, and of whom there are many who would gladly have penned this brief tribute to the man and his worth. In his profession proper of architect he had done some admirable work at an age when many are still enslaved at the desk, and as the fruit of his riper years he has left such a graceful piece of architecture as Dromore Castle in Ireland. Architecture is building refined into a fine art, where a structure that is necessary for any given purpose—a palace, a dwelling, a cathedral, a theatre—is made precious by the addition of artistic beauty. A true and deep sense of beauty, added to technical knowledge as wide in range as it

was accurate and intimate, marked all the achievements of Mr. Godwin, whether in architecture or in the varied work that he did for the stage. His combination of architectural and archæological learnning with a fine sense of the requirements of art, showed itself strikingly in the Greek theatre which he built at Hengler's Circus a few months ago, where, during the too brief performance of Mr. Todhunter's classical play of "Helena in Troas," we were enabled to form for the time, from actual sight, some notion of the stage and its surroundings whereon the plays of Sophocles were enacted in Sophocles' own day. In the construction of this gem-like little theatre—a memory of the Hellas of history—the claims of archæology and of art were honoured in equal measure, and the result was certainly unique in the annals of English dramatic art.

It would be superfluous to speak of Mr. Godwin's connection with the Society of Pastoral Players, whose chief performances, and Mr. Godwin's large share in the gratifying success which attended them, have been noticed more than once in these pages. The Society was founded some two years and a half ago by Lady Archibald Campbell, who was fortunate in securing from the first the more than willing co-operation of Mr. Godwin in the delightful series of open-air entertainments which have made the past three seasons memorable in social as well as in theatrical records. We had almost forgotten that we had a pastoral drama until Mr. Godwin produced the "Faithfull Shepherdesse," for us at Coombe last summer, and Lady Archibald showed us that a Thessalian shepherd could look and move and speak like one descended from the gods. Mr. Godwin, as Art Director of the Society, was everything to the Pastoral Players: he adapted the plays, designed the costumes, rehearsed the players, and made himself responsible throughout; and when we have added to the practical skill of the Art Director in planning and conducting a performance the rare exotic charm of the President's acting, we need seek no further to account for the fame which the Pastoral Players and their plays have won these past three summers. Young men of all degrees, toiling on the steep and narrow path that leads to greatness and renown in art, have lost a generous friend and a sound counsellor in Mr. Godwin, who would himself have left us work of enduring value had strength of body been given him in proportion to his strength and originality of mind.

Miss Emily Faithfull has long borne a favourable reputation as an elocutionist possessed of much sympathetic expression, and her talents in this direction were very advantageously pressed into service by the Manchester Vocal Society at a service of song recently given in the Broughton Park Congregational Church. The first part of the performance consisted of Rossini's "Athalie," the text of which is rendered into English by W. Bartholomew. It was in the intermediate

passages of this that Miss Faithfull's aid was needed, and herein she discovered a grace and dignity which lent a novel charm to the work. Mr. Henry Watson is the conductor of the society, while amongst the artists who lent their services were Misses Pattie Standen, Jessie Moorhouse, Wolstenholme, and Pendlebury.

Madame Trebelli is now among our American cousins. The great deep seemed loath to let her depart from our shores, where she has so many friends, for the early part of the passage was of the roughest; but, with due courtesy, the sun came out and shone brightly to welcome her on the other side of the Atlantic. The popular contralto will make her headquarters in New York, where her friends are very numerous. On October 18 she left for Canada, where she was to stay for one week to fulfil concert engagements. She will next sing at a grand concert in Boston, and on her return to New York she is to be heard in several classical and philharmonic concerts. Madame Trebelli is so well appreciated in America that it is to be feared the English public will be deprived of hearing her for many months.

The fanciful imagination and graceful pen of Mr. H. Savile Clarke have been employed in the completion of an extravaganza, to be called "Alice in Wonderland," the first act based upon that book, and the second upon "Through the Looking-glass." This has been done with the full sanction and permission of the author, Mr. Lewis Carroll, and the aim of the adaptor has been to be as loyal as possible to these classics of the nursery. Mr. Walter Slaughter has composed the music where it is needed, for we understand that by the express wish of Mr. Carroll, where he has parodied an old song—such, for example, as in "Beautiful Songs"—the old tune will be preserved. The extravaganza will be played at a series of morning performances at the Prince of Wales's Theatre at Christmas, and it is said that on H.R.H. and the Princess of Wales recently visiting that house to see the successful opera, "La Béarnaise," Mr. Edgar Bruce mentioned the forthcoming extravaganza to them, the idea eliciting high approval and a promise of their presence. The piece will be played by grown-up actors and by children, and should certainly be one of the most attractive entertainments ever offered to the public.

Let me wish all health, happiness, and many a blessing to my friend and able colleague on THE THEATRE—Austin Brereton, who, on October 11, was married at the Church of Our Lady, Grove Road, St. John's Wood, to Miss Edith Blande.

"And would'st thou to the same aspire,
This is the art thou must employ—
Live rightly; so shalt thou acquire
Unknown capacities of joy."

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from September 24 to October 25, 1886 :—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

LONDON :

Sept. 25. "Dorothy," comic opera, in three acts, by B. C. Stephenson, composed by Alfred Cellier. Gaiety Theatre.

Oct. 4. "La Béarnaise," comic opera, in three acts, after the French of Leterrier and Vanloo, by Alfred Murray, composed by André Messager. Prince of Wales's Theatre. (First produced at the Grand Theatre, Birmingham, on Sept. 27.)

,, 6. "The Undergraduates," new and original farcical comedy, in three acts, by W. Outram Tristram. Opéra Comique. (Matinée, single performance.)

,, 6. "A Happy Day," farce, by Richard Henry. Gaiety Theatre.

,, 9. "My Lord in Livery," comedietta, by S. Theyre Smith. Princess's Theatre.

,, 11. "Indiana," new and original comic opera, in three acts, by H. B. Farnie, composed by Audran. Avenue Theatre. (First produced at the Comedy Theatre, Manchester, on Oct. 4.)

,, 11. "The Magic Ring," comic opera, in two acts, by Oswald Brand, composed by Immanuel Liebich. Grand Theatre, Islington.

,, 13. "The Nettle," comedietta, by Ernest Warren. Court Theatre.

,, 18. "Saved from the Streets; or, Waifs and Strays," drama, in four acts, by George Conquest and R. H. Eaton. Surrey Theatre.

,, 25. "The Hobby-Horse," an original comedy, in three acts, by A. W. Pinero. St. James's Theatre.

PROVINCES :

Sept. 23. "Blind Justice," drama, by E. C. Bertrand. Theatre Royal, Wolverhampton.

,, 27. "Rhoda," comic opera, in three acts, by Walter Parke, composed by Antonio L. Mora. Theatre Royal, Croydon.

,, 27. "La Béarnaise." Grand Theatre, Birmingham. (See London, Oct. 4.)

,, 27. "United," drama, in three acts, by J. N. Harley and Auguste Creamer. Theatre Royal, Consett.

Oct. 4. "Indiana." Comedy Theatre, Manchester. (See London, Oct. 11.)

,, 14. "Elsa Dene," drama, in four acts, by A. C. Calmour. Theatre Royal, Brighton.

,, 18. "Ups and Downs," comedy, in three acts, by Mark Melford. Theatre Royal, Jersey.

PARIS :

Sept. 22* "L'Ile de Tulipatan," opera-bouffe, in one act; words by MM. Chivot-Duru; music by Jacques Offenbach. Cluny.

,, 22* "Denise," comedy in four acts, by Alexandre Dumas. Théâtre Français.

,, 24* "Serment d'Amour," comic opera, in three acts; libretto by M. Maurice Ordonneau; music by M. Edmond Audran. Nouveautés.

Sept. 25* "Les Pirates de la Savane," drama, in five acts and eight tableaux, by M. Ferdinand Dugué. Beaumarchais.

,, 26* "La Vie de Bohême," comedy, in four acts, by M. Henri Murger. Odéon.

,, 28* "Hamlet," adapted by Alexandre Dumas, père, and Paul Meurice. Théâtre Français.

Oct. 1* "Un Parisien," comedy, in four acts, by M. Gondinet. Théâtre Français.

,, 1 Reopening of the Nouveau Cirque in the Rue St. Honoré.

,, 2* "Lili," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Hennequin and Albert Millaud. Variétés.

,, 5 "Juarez; ou, la Guerre du Mexique," drama, in five acts and nine tableaux, by M. Alfred Gassier. Château d'Eau.

,, 6 "Adam et Eve," operette, in four acts, by MM. Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché; music by M. Gaston Serpette. Nouveautés.

,, 6 "Dans une Loge," comedy, in one act, by M. Ludovic Denis de Lagarde. Déjazet.

,, 7* "Frou-Frou," comedy, in five acts, by MM. Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. Gymnase.

,, 8* "La Tour de Nesle," drama, in five acts and nine tableaux, by MM. Gaillardet and Dumas, père. Porte-St.-Martin.

,, 9 "Les Trois Noces," vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Emile and Edouard Clerc. Renaissance.

,, 11 Les Petites Manœuvres," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Alfred Delacour and Eugène Champvert. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 11 "La Crevette," comedy-vaudeville, in one act, by M. William Busnach. Menus-Plaisirs.

,, 14 "Les Fils de Jahel," drama, in a prologue and four acts, in verse, by Madame Simone Arnaud. Odéon.

,, 15* "Niniche," vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Alfred Hennequin and Albert Millaud. Variétés.

,, 16 "Les Femmes Collantes," comedy-bouffe, in three acts, by M. Léon Gaudillot. Déjazet.

,, 18 "Les Deux Pigeons," ballet, in two acts and three tableaux, by MM. Henri Regnier and Louis Mérante; music by M. André Messager. Grand Opéra.

,, 19 "Madame Cartouche," comic opera, in three acts, by MM. William Busnach and Pierre Decourcelle; music by M. Léon Vasseur. Folies Dramatiques.

THE THEATRE.

The Lion's Mouth.

By J. Palgrave Simpson.

[Innumerable readers of The Theatre, who for many years have enjoyed the stories, sketches, essays, and theatrical anecdotes contributed to the magazine by my old friend, Palgrave Simpson, will regret to read the sad words that accompany his last manuscript. "As I said at a Farewell Dinner given to me at Eastbourne lately, 'Othello's occupation's gone!' I cannot write. My hand refuses its office (as you see), and my mind has lost the imagination and invention which formerly it afforded me so readily. I am recovering to a certain degree from my last illness, but I am still awfully weak and helpless God bless you, and aid you in all your work, dear old boy!"

"The Lion's Mouth" scarcely justifies these sad and desponding words, and I trust to print many more contributions from one of my oldest friends.—C. S.]

THERE are few who have entered the Doge's Palace in Venice, and mounted that historical flight of marble steps called "The Giant's Staircase," down which, as we are told, rolled the head of the Doge Marino Faliero, *decapitatus pro criminibus*, who have not paused, with some degree of awe, before that aperture in the wall of the gallery above, known in the annals of the Venetian Republic under the designation of "The Lion's Mouth."

It was in this aperture that secret denunciations were deposited, and the dreaded Council of Ten thus informed of unknown crimes, for the most part unsubstantiated or based on the feeblest suspicion. Great was the opportunity thus afforded to the jealous rivals either on the field of love or that of place and power. What a direct weapon it offered to cowardly envy, when an enemy was to be swept from the path of the unscrupulous! How many base hearts may have been eager to avail themselves of this tempting road to undetected revenge! The Council of Ten had their efficient spies in every part of Venice. But the secret delator was, none the less, acceptable to that jealous and ever-suspicious tribunal. He could mount the Giant's Staircase

unobserved, shrouded in mystery and his cloak, drop the denouncing packet in the gaping aperture, and slink away, with the conviction that the deed of treachery was safely done, and his revenge in all probability assured; for the Council seldom failed to act on the information thus conveyed, and the arrest of the object denounced followed almost as a certainty,

To this day, although these dark deeds are done no more, and no secret tribunal of judgment sits within those walls, it is almost impossible for any stranger, even loosely acquainted with the fhistory of the Venetian Republic, not to look on this grinning opening in the wall, and hear its apalling name, without a shudder.

The Venetian "Lion's Mouth" carries on its dark mysteries no longer now. But civilisation has still its "Lions' Mouths" in every capital, every city, every town, even every village which progress has reached in modern times. True, these "Lions' Mouths" are far from being used exclusively for the denunciation of envy or revenge. True, they constitute one of the greatest and most extensive boons which modern civilisation has bestowed on ungrateful man. But still many of the attributes and characteristics of the old "Lion's Mouth" of the Doge's Palace in Venice cling about them. At least, I for one can seldom look on any "Lion's Mouth" of the present day—myriads as there are of them—without feeling how much, in many respects, the comparison may be drawn.

Our "Lions' Mouths," at the present day, are the apertures by which letters are dropped into the innumerable post-boxes. That of the pillar-post always appears to me to wear an especially mysterious grin.

To this day the "Lion's Mouth" gapes to receive delations, accusations, scandalous threats. To this day anonymous warnings, anonymous denunciations, anonymous hints affecting the characters of our nearest and dearest, smiting hearts with strange suspicions, and ruining the peace of mind of mothers, husbands, lovers, or whole families, can still find easy transmission through these silent receptacles of all written communications, good or bad. The modern "Lion's Mouth" still holds its mighty power of mischief and evil-doing; and although it may not lead to arrest, and finally to the scaffold of a Council of Ten, or cruel imprisonment, it may entail, and does still entail, misery and misfortune, shattered hearts and crushed lives. It may mortify the susceptible by unmerited abuse, and unhinge minds hitherto calm and unwrung. The

envious slanderer may still smile with revengeful satisfaction as he drops his poisonous missive into the gaping aperture.

But in how many other ways may not our "Lion's Mouth" suggest situations fraught with agony and doubt or entailing future wretchedness—scenes which fully justify feelings of awe to those who gaze on it! Look at that young man who approaches that postal pillar-box. He stands before it. He seems to hesitate. He passes on, clenching a letter in his hand. Then a frown passes over his brow. He returns with hurried steps. His arm is raised with the letter in his hand. But he again hesitates. The very aspect of the pillar-box, solemn and grim, and smeared with the colour of blood seems to appal him. A heavy sigh escapes him, and he hangs his head undecidedly. But presently that frown again darkens his face. Yes, his resolution is taken definitively; with quick, feverish, nervous movement he thrusts his letter into the aperture. He does not drop it listlessly, as the transmitter of any ordinary letter would do. It slips from his sight with unusual rapidity. Why, then, does he pause? Why does he look so pale, with his eyes fixed on the aperture, and clench his hands despairingly? It is obvious that he would willingly undo his deed, and recall that folded paper. But it is now too late. He knows well that the grim opening will never yield up to him the prey placed within its maw. The "Lion's Mouth" is inexorable. He has no power over that letter more. It must, it will arrive at its destination. Its contents are as much beyond his reach as were the letter already a hundred miles distant. He gasps, and walks slowly on his way, sighing heavily, and tottering like a drunken man amidst the other unheeding passengers on the pavement. Who is this young man? It may be supposed that he has had a quarrel with his lady-love, arising from some probably unfounded jealousy. He has written her a letter of the bitterest reproach, and broken off his engagement with her for ever. But yet he has doubted; his heart still clung to her. His tenderer feelings have struggled with his angry passions; but the evil demon has prevailed. It is all over now. He has shut out the beloved from him for ever. The "Lion's Mouth" has sealed his fate, and closed to him the last path to reconciliation.

Look, again, on that dainty, youthful, female figure slowly approaching our "Lion's Mouth." Like Shakespeare's schoolboy, she evidently "crawls unwillingly" to her destination. Yet her

mind appears to be made up beforehand. She has no hesitation in accomplishing her task; but she dreads the moment of making a great sacrifice. She lingers over the sight of the superscription of her letter. She sighs heavily, and slowly, though deliberately, she allows the missive to slip from her fingers. Another heavy sigh. Then she pulls her veil hastily over her face. The tears are coursing themselves down her cheeks; and her weakness must not be seen. She slowly disappears among the crowd of passers-by. What is her story? Let us conjecture it. She loves —loves with all her heart and soul. She has plighted her troth to the object of her affections. But parents, or harsh relatives, have opposed the marriage. She has long resisted and refused obedience to their dictates of expediency—dictates emanating from worldly-wise heads, not loving hearts. She has endured daily persecution and petty tyranny. But her spirit has at last been broken, and she has given way. Rather than allow her lover to be stricken down by the harsh reproaches or cruel slights of the hard ones at home, she has herself written the torturing words by which she renounces him for ever. Her life, she knows, has been shattered; her hopes in happiness in fond affection have been crushed for ever. The "Lion's Mouth" has absorbed the letter which decides her destiny. Hence those tears.

This is evidently a business man. He is shabbily dressed, yet with a certain degree of neatness and care, and an evident desire to attain the prouder epithet of "respectable," although obviously poor. There can be no sentiment about him, one might think. Who knows? His expression is stern and resolute. But there are the indications of trouble, and sorrow, and sore struggle on his face. He walks firmly to the "Lion's Mouth." He drops his letter without a moment's hesitation. His mind has been evidently made up. His "courage" has been "screwed to the sticking-place" to despatch that letter. But yet he sighs heavily, and walks away "with a troubled brow and a bended neck." Poor man! Although he has not hesitated, he has accomplished a bitter sacrifice, a sacrifice made to affection. He does not regret, but he deplores it. He is wretchedly poor. The firm in which he was employed as clerk has failed. But he has been offered a lucrative appointment in a distant colony. It was his duty to himself to accept. But his poor little wife has clung round his neck. Her bitter entreaties, "Do not leave me, Charlie—do not

leave me, or I shall die!" have rung in his ears. He had promised her regular remittances from his far-off destination; he had placed before her eyes a vision of future pleasant competence, when they can live happily together, and never part again. But the sad cry, "O, do not leave me—do not leave me, or I shall die!" could not be resisted. He has clasped his wife in his arms, and sobbed forth, "No, no; there, there, I will not leave you!" The bright prospect of future fortune has been swept from his hopeful mind. He has written to decline the offer made him; and he returns to his poor home, his struggle with poverty and his growing cares, to assure his anxious wife that all is over, and repeat his words, "No, no; I will not leave you!"

She is gorgeously dressed, that splendid woman who is now approaching the "Lion's Mouth" with a letter in her hand. She has no air of hesitation about her, but rather of wild defiance. Her head is tossed back, her cheeks are flushed. Hesitation? No! Her mind is evidently made up as to the transmission of that letter. Yet she looks around her cautiously before she deposits it in the aperture. If not hesitation, there is evidently anxiety stamped on her face. No one whom she knows is within sight. The letter is flung into the box with a back-handed toss of reckless determination, but, at the same time, with a sigh of relief, as if a load were taken off her mind; and she walks proudly on. She, too, has determined her destiny by that one act! Did you see the ring on the finger of that one ungloved hand? Yes; she is a married woman. But she has fallen. Her lover has written to her, imploring her to quit her home, her husband, and her children, and elope with him. Passion has prevailed over all sense of duty, honour, and maternal love. She has written to say that she will meet the man, to whom she sacrifices everything, and that they will flit away together. She has closed her perverted mind to all repentance or remorse. Yet, perhaps, and even probably, remorse and repentance are still to come and cry aloud to her. Meanwhile the "Lion's Mouth" has absorbed that fatal missive, which will bring misery and shame, a shattered household, the agony of a fond husband, and the wailings of two poor innocent little girls, to whom she leaves a destiny of dishonour in the world's eyes, and a future of shame in the memory of their erring mother.

That is a handsome young fellow who comes dawdling and, at the same time, swaggering along in the full attire of elaborate

swelldom. Yes, a goodly youth and decidedly handsome. The faint, fair moustache on his upper lip proclaims that he is young—very young; and, alas! the expression of that fair face, with its blue eyes and its weakness of pouting mouth, proclaims, at the same time, that he is foolish—very foolish! He stands by the post-box and whips his neatly-fitting trousers with his natty cane. With deliberate ease he takes a letter from his breast-pocket; with equally deliberate ease, and a smile on his silly lip, he lets it fall into the "Lion's Mouth," and walks on with that manner which combines so curiously the dawdle with the swagger, as if he had done some deed of note which entitled him to a civic crown and the grateful recognition of mankind. And what has he done? He is in the toils of a woman of bad repute—beautiful, adroit, cunning. She has lured the moth to the bright, dazzling candle of her beauty. His wings have been cruelly singed; he no longer feels the force to fly away. But she has affected the coyness of strict and indignant virtue. Never—no, never—would she yield to him but as his lawful wife. She had baited her hook with every possible allurement; she had enticed her poor fish round and round in her vile eddy of fascination and flattery. The fish has been caught at last. He has written to offer her his hand, with a promise of honourable marriage. The "Lion's Mouth" has swallowed its prey; and then what is left to the wretched victim? He binds himself for life to an abandoned woman; he has entailed on himself a future of misery, when, at last, his eyes are opened to the true character of his wretched wife; the wrath and scorn of his family, the abandonment to his fate by all whom he has hitherto considered near and dear to him. What a prospect! There is but one alternative, but that only if his eyes should be opened in time, and his foolish infatuation have been dispelled; the alternative of an action for "breach of promise," with all its scandals and degrading publicity and heavy damages; for the deed has been done, and his promise will be, in a few short hours, in that woman's hands. Truly, thou silent aperture, thou hast swallowed more promises than one. The promise of a miserable existence has come into thy possession!

A very different object is the youth who next comes sneaking up to the all-absorbing aperture. He is slangishly, though shabbily, dressed. His cap is jauntily stuck aside on his rough shock of curly hair. He is young, scarcely yet arrived at the age of man-

hood; but his pale, sodden face, the dark rims beneath his eyes, and the slouching gait betray an early life of low dissipation. He, too, looks furtively around him as he drops his letter; then winks his eye with an air of cunning satisfaction, and whistles, but with a low and doubtful whistle, as he slouches away with his dirty ungloved hands in his pockets. He, too, has decided his destiny. Idleness and premature debauchery, fostered in the gin-shop, the pot-house, and the low slums of evil, have thrown him in the way of a gang of thieves and systematic law-breakers. Little by little they have lured him on to listen to their promises of wealth and jollity if he will join them in their nefarious schemes. He is a dapper, active young fellow; and they know his advantage in their schemes of robbery. Will he join them? Such a glorious existence, they urge, will be his! A little risk, the faintest fear of detection, and his pockets will be filled, and the world's enjoyments—such as are enjoyments in his eyes—will be within his grasp. He has hesitated, with some natural apprehension. But the devil's wiles have conquered him. He has succumbed. A burglary will be committed the next night. He has but to consent to be one of the gang, and he will cover himself with glory—in their eyes, at least. That letter, partly written in slang, partly in cipher, unintelligible to all but those who will receive it, or perhaps, my dainty lad, to the police—you do not think of that—has sealed his fate. He has accepted the offer made him. He has taken his first step downwards. Before him lies a career of crime, brief, may be, with its hazards and its terrors, chequered by feverish snatches of reckless sensualities; and then the prison, with all the horrors of misery, relieved by the refreshing episodes of oakum-picking or stone-breaking. Truly the time may come when he will bitterly repent that he ever dropped that letter into the "Lion's Mouth."

How many other follies of youth—follies which may decide destinies, and lead, in the future, to fatal results—are committed to paper and intrusted to that awful depository, from which they are no longer to be recalled! Now we have the sporting shop-boy, who writes to put on the horse recommended by his 'tip'-giver, thinks to make such "an awful good thing of it," and finds that he has only burned his fingers, and lost more than the last sixpence he possessed. Shall we suggest that his master would do well to look carefully to the contents of his till, and that a

charge of embezzlement may next greet our young aspirant on the turf? But all those who commit their destinies to the awful post-box are not evil-doers. Here we have the ingenuous youth, the kind, genial, trusty friend, who, entreated by a comrade to put his name to the back of a bill—just for the form, you know, and entailing no consequences, as the bill is sure to be met—has not the heart to refuse. He indorses his name and sends back the bill to his dear friend, without one single doubt or shadow of fear for the future. Yet friends are treacherous sometimes; and the poor confiding fellow may have brought on himself a long period of misery and privation to meet another's debt, and have to endure for the better part of his life persecution, and threats, and disgrace from pitiless creditors to whom he owes really nothing. May not his whole life be thus blighted? Here, now, we have the silly, pretty housemaid; she has a follower—"a charming fellow, quite a gentleman," she tells her fellow-servants. He has written to propose to her an appointment. She means no ill. She simply sees a chance of settling in life, and she writes to accept the rendezvous he asks. She will meet this man. She does not see in any prophetic "mind's eye" the miserable fate which may await her by that simple act—the confiding of those few brief words to the post-box. Yet in the future may loom the spectre of seduction, desertion, and shame, and a life of squalor in the most hideous form, to which poor woman may fall in her trustfulness in the faith of man. O yes! the "Lion's Mouth" is full of the mysteries of destiny.

Types to whom the post-box aperture is a "Lion's Mouth" as fatal as that of Venice are innumerable as the varieties of human nature in mind, heart, feeling, and physiognomy. To attempt to describe them all would be an endless task. One more only, as more closely identified with the ancient prototype, shall be cited. A staid female in prim black attire, of more than middle age, approaches. Her arms are crossed sanctimoniously before her; on one she carries an old-fashioned reticule. Her face is cold and expressionless, although her thin lips are drawn down at the corners with an air resembling that of determination. She takes three or four letters from her reticule, examines their superscription carefully, and then drops them calmly into the box. There is no smile on her lips, but yet a defiant look in her eyes—even a gleam of satisfaction. What an infinity of mischief and misery has she sown broad-

cast in those letters! To the wife she has insinuated the infidelity of her husband to the mother; the misconduct of her only son to the father, the lost purity of his daughter; to the poor girl, the attachment of her affianced lover to another. To insinuations she has added obscure facts of her own ingenious invention. Scouted in her society as a scandal-monger, she seeks revenge by taking on herself the pleasant occupation of an anonymous slanderer. The type is the most odious, as the most common, of all. Who is there of us who has not received some sting from the anonymous correspondent? Who has not known the misery entailed on others, if not on himself? Truly her type comes more closely to the shrouded denunciator of old. And in no case does our modern post-box resemble more completely the ancient "Lion's Mouth."

The First Nights of My Young Days.

By Godfrey Turner.

It was either to the largest or to one of the smallest theatres in London that I was taken as a child between five and six years old, five-and-fifty years ago. My purpose in this and in other papers which may follow is to write my recollections of first nights as first nights, in the sense commonly understood; but I shall be pardoned if I make a start with my own particular first night in front of a play and I strongly incline to the belief that this event must have occurred when I was taken to see Wallack in "The Brigand." It is true that my early remembrance of the old Strand Theatre, whither I often went as quite a little boy, is more vague and indistinct than this reminiscence of Drury Lane. On a hasty consideration, its vagueness might be taken for proof of remoter juvenility. I must have been very young indeed when I burst into shrill, gleeful laughter as the curtain rose upon a ludicrous scene in "The Turned Head," all the audience except myself preserving a decorous silence. But the mere fact that I carried away with me impressions that were faint compared with those I derived from the performance of Wallack on the larger stage is, on second thoughts, no proof that I was older or younger at the time. Indeed on that very night of "The Brigand" I must have seen other things which I have clean forgotten. Probably these were "The Belle's Stratagem" and "Deaf as a Post"; and if such was the case, I saw Dowton in the first and Liston in the second, with Wallack as Doricourt, and Mrs. Waylett as Letitia Hardy, and Miss Mordaunt (afterwards Mrs. Nisbett, afterwards Lady Boothby) as Lady Frances Touchwood, and Mrs. Orger as Mrs. Racket, and Cooper as Sir George, without being durably impressed by any one of them, though I was in later time to make acquaintance with nearly all. Of Liston, at any period, I remember nothing, of Dowton next to nothing, of Mrs. Waylett little else than her singing of "The Light Guitar" and "Meet me by Moonlight alone." It was the new drama of "The Brigand" that filled my little mind, to the exclusion of all beside, though it was the last thing in the bill, and by rights I should have been asleep.

Eastlake had painted for the Royal Academy two pictures in the

Salvator Rosa vein; one of them, an Italian brigand-chief reposing, and the other, a brigand's wife watching the progress of a battle. These tableaux were realised in the first act. Maria Grazie, the brigand's wife, was Mrs. W. Barrymore, and though I had scarcely set up as a critic at the tender age of five and a half, "I knew what I liked," and I certainly did like Mrs. W. Barrymore. In the first scene, which occupied, if I remember aright, all the first act, Wallack, who pleased me mightily, both then and in after years, made a most comely bandit, rather dandified perhaps, but gallant and gay. I am afraid we should laugh at the character nowadays, and the sentiment, and the situations, though I don't know why we should. They were not half so outrageous as some that I have seen and heard in these latter days. Do any of my readers remember the plot of Planché's old melodrama? If so, they can check me if I am wrong. What I saw I saw, and can tell pretty plainly, but I may have mistaken some of the purport of it. So far from this having been the first night of "The Brigand," I should say it was nearer the fiftieth; for it had been a good deal talked of before I saw it.

How it came to pass that Alesandro Massaroni, illegitimate son of Prince Bianchi, Governor of Rome, was chief of the brigands, I can't pretend to say. It was so long ago and so far off. In the mountain-fastnesses where Massaroni's band seem on good terms with the neighbouring peasantry, and where there is a by no means unfrequented footpath, Mr. Wallack, picturesquely cross-gartered, is first seen reposing, even as Mr. Eastlake's model had reposed, for the celebrated picture. I remember that he, Mr. Wallack, or Massaroni, seemed to be tenderly regardful of a miniature which he wore by a ribbon suspended about his neck, and which he kissed with much affectionate fervour. His buoyancy, however, masters the emotion which a sight of the miniature has called up; and Massaroni is himself again. He is very much himself when he plays off a trick on an old steward, who is travelling along the footpath and is caught by the brigands. This wary old fellow has no money about him, not a stiver. He willingly submits to be searched, but shows a suspicious solicitude to keep possession of his long staff, which Massaroni playfully seizes and breaks across his knee. Then, forth roll the shining pieces, which are scrambled for by the brigands; and off goes the steward, much incensed by the knavery of the band and their leader. Two young Frenchmen, students travelling in search of the picturesque, come on the scene. One of them makes a picture of Massaroni. I have a dim idea that they depart with gratitude to him for setting them free when the band would have held them prisoners for ransom. The scene and the act close, I think, with the episode of the battle or skirmish between the

brigands and the Papal troops, the latter being repulsed. There is a ravine at the back of the stage, the fight going on below, and Maria watching it as she stands on the edge of the height, holding on by a tree. Mrs. Barrymore was excellent in this. She was one of the old school of pantomimists, now quite gone out. I can call to mind her face when I see an artist's model, or a girl pulling along a piano-organ, poor wench, habited in the peasant costume, with the flat folded white linen head-gear, and the large hoop-earrings. Fair Maria Grazie! Courageous Mrs. W. Barrymore! I see you now as well as if I had before my eyes the picture by Eastlake. As well? How infinitely better!

It is not with absolute certainty, though with something near conviction, that I speak of Mrs. B. as the original Maria. The piece must have run a month, and may perhaps have had a rest, when I saw it in the autumn of 1830. But of course I know, as everyone knows, that Wallack was the original Massaroni. What a thoroughly satisfying actor he was in parts such as this! Ten, or twelve, or it may be fifteen years afterwards, I saw him play a superfine brigand, a rather weak imitation of Massaroni and Fra Diavolo mixed up, in a piece from the French, *temp.* Louis XV., at the Princess's. What there was to make of it he made, like a thorough stage-gentleman, the best of his vigorous type at the time, though he was then almost in the sere, the yellow leaf. I can imagine that those who were old enough then to have seen Jack Bannister could pick holes in the coat of Jem Wallack, just as I, who saw J. W. in his prime, might speak with stinted and qualified praise of X. Y. *Z.* But how do we really know that Bannister's sailors, for instance, were so much superior to "Tippy" Cooke's, or that Mrs. Crouch and the "syren Billington" were unapproached by Louisa Pyne? The second act of "The Brigand," with which drama we are now concerned, introduces us to the splendid saloon of Prince Bianchi, who is going to hold a reception and give a ball in celebration of his daughter Ottavia's birthday. He presents her with a casket of beautiful diamonds, with which she is of course delighted; and the pleased expression of Miss Faucit seemed to my childish taste very natural, as I have no doubt it seemed to older judgments as well. One of the travelling students is Ottavia's drawing master and he shows her the likeness of the terrible brigand, tidings of whose victory over the troops have reached the Governor, greatly to his anger and mortification. Among the guests, Massaroni himself comes, under a feigned name and in the most patrician attire. He ingratiates himself with the Prince and Ottavia, his manners, of course, being such as to charm everyone. He admires Ottavia's jewels, having a taste for such things, and examines them

curiously—with some dry remarks which tickled the audience—before returning them with a graceful bow. The conversation turns on Massaroni, and, the sketch being talked of, Ottavia runs off to fetch it, to the confusion and dismay of the artist, pledged in gratitude not to betray the man who saved him from the brigands. All are astonished by the resemblance of the drawing to the distinguished guest, who, however, passes the thing off with elegant effrontery. "I have seen Massaroni," he says, "and I cannot say this is a good portrait. Indeed, now I look at it closely, I really think it is more like *me*." Massaroni takes a hand at cards with some high officer of the Vatican, and wins; throws dice and wins; excels in everything. Ottavia has asked him to sing. He takes a guitar, and sings a little ballad.

This song, "Gentle Zitella," as sung and acted by Wallack, with the quiet, expressive by-play of Miss Faucit to make it, in pantomime, a duet, took the town by storm. Everywhere "Gentle Zitella" was sung, played, hummed, whistled. The tune is now old enough to be almost new; and when I heard it played, two or three days ago, by a street-clarinet, the old time came back to me, as to Claude Melnotte, at the sound of a voice. Massaroni stops short at the end of a stanza which does not close the song. He is pressed by Ottavia and others to sing on to the conclusion. It is an awkward thing to do, but he puts a bold face on the matter, and continues thus:—

Gentle Zitella,
  Beware, ah, beware!
List ye no ditty,
  Grant ye no prayer.
To your light footsteps
  Let terror add wings:
'Tis—*Massaroni*
  Himself who now sings!
Gentle Zitella,
  Banish all fear;
Love's ritornella
  Tarry and hear.

It is impossible for me to doubt that Wallack impressed the house even as he impressed the youngest of his audience—myself. The thunders of applause ring in my ears now. You will observe that after the alarming disclosure of terrific personality, the singer re-assures the damsel by a return to the soft and soothing accents of the song. With his most dulcet and insinuating tones, the actor murmured the phrase, "Banish all fear," and Miss Faucit, having but the moment before shrunk, with a very genuine look of terror, from the man who had frightened her by feigning to be himself, seemed to lead in applauding the singer's dramatic ability.

The scene proceeds. In the midst of dancing and the hum of conversation, the old man whose concealed ducats had been strewn on the mountain road, by the breaking of his hollow staff, enters the saloon with a message, and in astonishment and dismay at sight of the brigand chief exclaims aloud, "Massaroni!" There is a scream and a general rush for the doors, the room being quickly emptied, and the locks all fastened on the trapped chief. In his endeavour to escape, he draws aside a curtain which may, as he hopes, be the *portière* screening some forgotten outlet. It conceals no doorway, but only a picture, a portrait. Struck with the gentle, compassionate look, he snatches the miniature from his breast and compares the faces. They are the same. Someone, I think it is the kind artist, now steals into the room and hastily concerts with Massaroni a plan of retreat. There is no time for explanation, but, speaking entirely from memory, and not having seen the play or the play-book since I was in the ugly dress of a little boy in those days, I fancy the brigand gets some inkling of his parentage. He takes to flight through a side-window. Then the door at the back is flung open, and soldiers in white uniform—yes, white uniform! I cannot forget them or their coats—draw up to the window, and, taking the word of command from their officer, make ready, present, fire. A few moments more, and Massaroni staggers on the stage, falls, and dies, the disclosure of his story being made in the presence of his remorseful father.

I have now recalled, doubtless imperfectly and with some unavoidable errors, the skeleton of a romantic drama which I saw, and which gave me pleasure, if not profit, when I was a very young child, fifty-five years ago. Perhaps I should not much care to see it again in its integrity, however well mounted and well played. Mercy forbid I should ever see it as it would most probably be presented now, that is to say, as a burlesque, under some such title as "Little Massaroni, the Boy Brigand; or, The Maid, the Masher, the Mystery, and the Penny Dreadful," Massaroni being performed (for the most part extempore) by some popular actress popularly spoilt for acting, and the principal female characters being men. I can imagine that in some such version the guitar song would be altered to suit a breakdown and a banjo, that an immensity of fun would be got out of the card-table business, that the picture of Massaroni's mamma would be made a "practicable" caricature with rolling and squinting goggle eyes, that the file of white-coated soldiery would be composed of girls in gaiters, with toy guns from the Lowther Arcade, and that all the meaning of the original romance (which I have essayed to summon from the past) would be carefully knocked out of it to

make way for buffoonery and those peculiar puns with which the yet more peculiarly rhymed burlesque of our generation is politely required and supposed to "bristle." *E.g.*:—

> How doth the busy brigand take his walks
> Abroad, and gather money, spoons, and forks,
> Or anything that he may come across,
> As, for example's sake, let's say a horse,
> Or straying pug-dog round the corner caught,
> Watches, umbrellas, anything, in short!
> I'd *hayve* those jewels off the fair Ottavia,
> If I weren't here upon my best behaviour.
> By aid of jemmy should the gems be torn
> From this proud swell; as well they'd keep in pawn.
> No scruples, I confess, my purpose bar,
> Bar one; that scruple is the girl's papa.
> The thought of ways and means, I mean much more
> Than scruples weigh, if any way I saw.

And so on; the sort of thing, in fact, which an "incorrigible," if sentenced to six months of it, would tell the beak he could "do on his head." I suppose that the sorry, tiresome stuff, neither worse nor better than this, which men of brains and classic nurture condescend without shame to spin by the yard, serves well enough to fill up manuscript which, after all, will only be mangled or left out by the actors to suit their own notions of rhythmic humour.

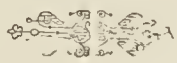
On the whole my early years of understanding fell in an age not unpropitious to the drama. A few good authors, since famous, were beginning to write plays which are not forgotten, and which fitted the actors of the time as they were intended to fit them. Kean, by the bye, whom I somehow missed, was beholden to no contemporaneous writer. Dowton was disappearing; so was Liston; and, as I have said, though I may have seen both, I remember neither. Nor can I call to mind much of Charles Kemble, on the stage, though I saw him pretty often in private life, when he was an old man and I a boy. The last time was at an opening performance of "The Taming of the Shrew," under Webster's management, at the Haymarket, when a somewhat pedantic attempt was made to realise the idea of the "play within a play." At the end of the performance Kemble stepped behind, I at the same time accompanying an elder relative of my own; and I heard C. K. compliment very graciously Mrs. Nisbett on her Katharina, and speak to Webster with polite cordiality, without praising his Petruchio, which indeed might have been equivocally defined in the phrase, "'Good' is not the word." For this clever actor, who could play many parts superlatively, was not entitled to reckon Petruchio among them. I saw Charles Kemble himself in Petruchio and in two other characters, namely, Pierre in "Venice Preserved" and Mercutio, two

nights running, the circumstances being somewhat remarkable. On the former of these consecutive occasions—the great actor's gifted and amiable daughter being the Juliet—there was so bad a Romeo that he only lasted one night, and was replaced, the following evening, by a novice, who could not be worse, had he tried, but was scarcely better. The first of these Montagues roared like a bull of Bashan; the second cooed as mildly as a sucking dove, and at times was not to be heard at all. Their names I know not. Accident—the accident of kinship—made me a reader and spectator of plays at an extremely juvenile period of my existence; and I may as well say that when Charles Kemble was playing Mercutio at Covent Garden, with a futile change of Romeos, an uncle of mine was cast in the modest *rôle* of old Montague. The cat is fairly out of the bag, and now you know how I came to be such a very young playgoer. That good uncle, and bad actor, lived an odd sort of life, but settled down at last into a snug independence, and died comparatively rich from houses and money luckily left him, or he would never have had either. I speak of him with honour, as of a man of the warmest heart and kindest disposition, with only one unflinching, remorseless, irreconcileable enemy in the world.

Though so many of the good actors remaining over from the last century had begun to drop away from the stage when I, in the 'thirties, had entered my early course of delight in this mimic life, others were coming on to fill their orbits. I have always regretted that I never saw Edmund Kean. That he would have fascinated me more than any other tragedian I have good reason to think. He was, if I mistake not, the only living male actor, when I was a child, and when my father's, my uncle's, and my own dear friend, Leigh Hunt, was writing, single-handed, "The Tatler," to whom this past-master of theatrical criticism accorded the full honours of *genius* in the capacity of a dramatic exponent. Now, Leigh Hunt was fairly open to the charge of being an inveterate *laudator temporis acti*. His early critiques, first in "The News" and then in "The Examiner," written a good many years—sixteen to twenty, that is to say—before I was born, and when he himself was youthful, were, of course, pretty free from "bygones." Yet, when he came to look back, in after years, at Bannister and Mrs. Jordan, how much more affectionately he spoke of them than when he had had them in actual view, when George the Third was King, or than he could find it in his heart to speak of living players! But of Kean, and of Kean alone, he wrote with unqualified praise in the nightly and daily records of that unrivalled actor's achievements. Leigh Hunt never, he declared again and again, saw Kean without being moved, and moved, too, in fifty

different ways—by his sarcasm, his sweetness, his pathos, his tranquillity, his measureless dignity, his exceeding grace, his gallant levity, his noble self-possession. It is a calamity to have missed opportunities, even in childhood, of seeing an actor who could thus be described and thus remembered.

While for me stars of the first and second magnitudes were dying out, there were many to take their places in my young imagination. Had I not Wallack, first god of my idolatry; had I not Macready, Phelps, Harley, Wrench, the Keeleys, Farren, Mrs. Orger, Miss Kelly (of the "divine plain face"), Mrs. Glover, Miss Helen Faucit, and many, many more I cannot hope to see the like of, simply because, if the like were to come indeed, they could not bring to me the enthusiasm of my youth? It was when I was yet a child that a young country actor began to make his mark by playing in farce and low comedy, and anon by writing melodramas and pieces of that stamp. The first I saw of him was at the City Subscription Theatre, in Milton Street, at the East End. He played a character called Foxey Jackson in a new domestic drama, which I saw on the night when it was first brought out. It was entitled "Eily O'Connor; or, The Foster Brother," and was founded on Gerald Griffin's novel, "The Collegians," from which also "The Colleen Bawn" was taken about thirty years later. In it were Miss Ellen Tree, Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, James Vining, and Miss Forde. Their relative characters were Eily O'Connor, Mrs. Cregan, Hardress, Anne Chute, and Danny Mann. There was no Myles-na-Copaleen; but the representative of Foxey, who, likely enough, was the author of the piece, was named John Baldwin Buckstone. Gentles, my tale is so far said. *Valete et plaudite.*



The Last Match.

By Frank A. Marshall.

YES, we family solicitors do come across some queer experiences now and then; and I do not mind telling you one which happened to me twenty years ago, as all the parties concerned are now dead.

Thus spoke my old friend James Lewsom, as we sat over our wine together at his charming country house in Kent. I give the story as nearly as possible in his own words, omitting the questions and observations with which I interrupted him.

It was, I think, in the summer of 1864, that I was walking in the Row one day, in the season, with a friend, when a well-appointed stanhope passed us, driven by a young man who nodded very graciously to me. By his side was seated one of the most celebrated "Anonymas" of the day; I think that was the cant word then used for *ladies* of that description. "Who is that?" my friend asked; "I mean the man, not the woman." "That is young Charles Dunstanley, the son of an old client of our firm. I am afraid he is going to the devil as fast as he can; and his companion is just the person to help him. He will not be the first young man that Liddie May has helped to ruin."

I did not hear or see anything of young Dunstanley till the autumn of that year, when I heard that he had gone to the South of France. There was something wrong with his chest, as poor Theodore Hook said when he came back from the Mauritius; for with the help of Miss Liddie, he had got rid of a considerable sum of money, more than his father, who was very indulgent, would be likely to pay.

Early next year—I think about the month of February—I got a letter from old Mr. Dunstanley asking me, as a special favour, to go down on a visit to him at Dunstanley Park, which, as I daresay you know, is in Sussex, about fifty miles from London. It happened that, though comparatively young, I was the member of the firm who transacted all his business; and, rightly or wrongly, he had great confidence in my intelligence. I settled with my partners to take a

few days' leave of absence. That evening I arrived at Dunstanley Park. I found my client all alone; he was a widower, and we dined *tête-à-tête*. After dinner, when the butler had left the room, he informed me why he had sent for me. It would appear that he had recently missed, on more than one occasion, sums of money from a drawer in a cabinet in the library, which he always kept locked, and of which he alone possessed the key. He did not wish to put the matter into the hands of the police; and therefore had asked me to stay a few days and help him, if possible, to discover the thief. This of course I promised to do.

We talked on other subjects, and I inquired after his son. I learned, to my surprise, that Charles had returned suddenly in the previous December from the South of France, and had been very ill ever since. His father had brought him to Dunstanley Park, thinking that the air might do him good. He had been for some time quite confined to his room; and his father was very much afraid that consumption, which had proved fatal to his mother, had caught a firm hold on his weakened constitution. I did not see Charles at all till next day; but he certainly looked very ill, and he had a most distressing cough.

For two days I could discover nothing with regard to the robbery; but, on the third day, happening to be in the village post office, I saw Wilson, Mr. Dunstanley's valet, who had been a long time in his service, bring a letter to be registered. When he had gone, I managed to draw the postmistress into conversation; and, without asking any leading questions, I elicited the fact that Wilson had been in the habit lately of bringing a great many letters to be registered. When I got back to the Park, and was alone with my host, I asked him to examine the drawer of his cabinet, to see whether any money was missing. He did so; and found, as I expected, that some notes to the amount of £130, which had been paid to him only the day before by a tenant, were gone. There was no sign whatever of the lock having been tampered with; so that it was evident that the thief with whom we had to deal must have got possession of Mr. Dunstanley's keys, or must have possessed a duplicate key; for the drawer was certainly locked, and my client was perfectly sure that he had locked it immediately after putting the notes away.

The next thing to do, of course, was to trace the notes; but, unfortunately, my client had not taken the numbers, as he intended to pay them into the bank the very next morning. The tenant, from whom he had received them, had gone to the Continent on business. So, in this dilemma, I had no choice but to try and trace the notes through the provincial banker, and to write to the tenant; but this,

of course, would take some time. Meanwhile I made some inquiries about Wilson. I found that he had been corresponding lately with betting men, which to me was a very suspicious circumstance; for I generally find that servants who take to betting end, as a rule, by robbing their masters. I asked Mr. Dunstanley if he ever left his keys about. He said that he had been in the habit of leaving them in his pocket before the first robbery occurred; but after that he had always placed them under his pillow. It was the old story of course; shutting the stable door after the horse was stolen. There had evidently been plenty of time for his valet to take the model of any key that he wanted. However, Wilson's character was very much in his favour. He had lived fifteen years with his master, had been most implicitly trusted, and was deeply attached both to him and to Charles Dunstanley. In fact it appeared that he had nursed the latter as devotedly as any woman could have done. Evidently, it would not do for me to hint at any suspicions I might entertain against Wilson; I should probably only anger my client, and, if my suspicions were correct, give the thief a warning to be on his guard. All that I could advise Mr. Dunstanley to do was, to give me all his papers and securities of any value which he had in the house, and to place them in safety by taking them up next day to London myself, and depositing them with his bankers. In the meanwhile I suggested that he should put some marked money and some numbered notes in the same drawer from which the others had been stolen; locking the drawer, of course, as before. This he did in my presence.

That evening, at dinner, to the astonishment both of his father and myself, Charles Dunstanley put in an appearance. He looked very ill, but he made himself very agreeable. He was gentle and affectionate to his father, and remarkably attentive to me. The next morning I started for London about ten o'clock. I placed the securities in a small travelling bag, which was fastened with two patent locks. Just before it was time for me to start, Charles Dunstanley came downstairs. He said he had come to say good-bye, and asked me to execute a small commission for him, viz., to procure him a new patent medicine for inhaling. This I gladly consented to do. Just at this moment the dog-cart drove up, and my client called me into the library. I left my bag on a chair in the hall. When I came back, two or three minutes afterwards, Charles Dunstanley was standing with his back towards me, examining the bag. When he saw me, he started: "I was only looking at your bag; it seems a very convenient one, well secured." "Yes," I remarked, "I have got a rather valuable charge in it." Saying that, and shaking hands with him, I took the bag, and jumped into the

cart. The first thing I did, when I got into the railway carriage, was to unlock the bag and see that the valuables were all right. This I did merely as an ordinary precaution. I reached London all right; deposited the securities, &c., with Mr. Dunstanley's bankers; and returned, as I had arranged, by the evening train, in time for dinner. My host had asked me to call at the post-office for the letters, which would not be delivered in the ordinary course till next morning. I did so, and took the liberty to examine them. There were two for Wilson—one in a business hand, the other in a woman's scrawl; the rest were all for my client; for his son there were none.

That evening Charles did not dine with us, and his father took the opportunity, when we were alone, of talking very seriously to me about him. I must say that it was a most painful conversation; for I cannot bear to see a strong man in tears, and my dear old friend—for he really was more a friend than a client—could sometimes hardly speak, owing to his emotion. He had heard, somehow or other, of his son's goings on in London last season, and of his insane attachment to Liddie May. One rumour was that he had been mad enough to marry her. This report I ventured to contradict; I said I believed that that estimable lady had one or two husbands already living. However, there was no doubt that the young man had ruined his health and his reputation, and had involved himself to an extent which, probably, he himself even did not know. "Now, my dear Lewsom," said my host, "I want you to speak to him; he seems to have taken a liking to you. You know young men never will tell their fathers the truth. Dr. Jameson says he fears that some secret distress is aggravating the disease; and that, unless his mind can be set at ease, there is very little chance of saving his life. With me he is, I regret to say, very reserved; but do, my dear fellow, assure him that my only desire is to relieve him of all anxiety, at whatever cost to my pocket. Tell him not to be afraid, but to get rid of every claim upon him, now and for ever." I need not say that I promised, most sincerely, to do my very best to carry out Mr. Dunstanley's wishes.

The next day happened to be an exceptionally fine one for the time of year; so I went up to Charles's room, and proposed that we should go out for a drive together. He consented readily, but seemed terribly nervous. During the drive I invited his confidence in the most delicate manner, and hinted gently that I knew all about Liddie May. Upon this he burst forth into the most enthusiastic praises of that experienced siren. It was evidently an infatuation, a delusion I may say, almost enough to convince anyone of his insanity. She was "the most injured of women"; "her life had

been unhappy"; she had been "deeply wronged," &c., &c. He ended by assuring me, most earnestly, that he loved her, and should never love anyone else. Of course I could say nothing to that; so, to change the subject, I reverted to the question of money. I told him that, though his father had suffered several severe losses lately, he was ready to discharge, in full, all his son's *bonâ fide* debts. "What, has my father lost money?" he asked. "He has not surely been speculating?" "No," I answered; "but he has been systematically robbed for the last two months. We did not want to upset you by telling you anything about it; but, perhaps, you ought to know. For my part, I have my suspicions as to who the thief is; but, at present, they are only suspicions and not proofs." I turned round to look at my companion, who was driving, and saw that he looked deathly pale, and that his hands were trembling. I was sorry that I had made any allusion to the subject, as his nerves were evidently in a very excitable condition. Shortly after, we came to a place where the road passed a very steep embankment which was not fenced. We had scarcely gone twenty yards, when the two cobs that Charles was driving—whether in his nervousness he pulled the wrong rein or not, I cannot say—swerved violently, and we were within an ace of going down the embankment; in which case I think that we should have arrived at kingdom come, if I had not seized the reins just in time to save our lives. My companion looked like death, as well he might; and for the rest of the way home I drove; no more conversation passed between us. When we got home, Charles declared that he felt unwell, and that he should go to bed at once, which he did, so that his father and I had another *tête-à-tête* that evening. I told him the result of my conversation with Charles; and expressed my conviction that, unless something was done, he would end by marrying that much-wronged woman, Liddie May, who was said lately to have developed a passion for gambling. It was my impression that a great portion of Charles's liabilities would prove to have been contracted on her account, and not on his own; a conjecture which, as you will presently see, was pretty near the truth.

After dinner we went into the library, where I was allowed to smoke my cigar. It was not the custom, at that time, to smoke all over the house, as it is now. The lighting, even of a cigarette, in the dining-room would have been considered, then, a very ill-bred proceeding. Before my host left me, we unlocked the drawer where the marked money had been placed, and found that both notes and gold were all there. My host bade me good night; and I retired into a little room which opened out of the library, with only a draped archway

between the rooms. I established myself in a very comfortable chair, and, after reading for about an hour I must have fallen asleep.

When I awoke ,my candle was burnt out; and there was only a very dim light from the half-turned down lamp in the next room. I awoke in that half-dazed condition which is generally the result of going asleep too soon after a hasty meal; and, for some minutes, I could not quite recollect where I was. I took my repeater out of my pocket, and touched the spring. It struck two; so that I must have slept longer than I thought. I was just going to pull myself together and go up to my bedroom, when I heard a noise as of some one cautiously opening the library door from the outside. Immediately afterwards I heard a sound which made me instantly hold my breath; and my heart was beating so fast that it almost choked me. There was no mistaking that sound; it was the laboured breathing of a person suffering from an acute affection of the lungs. I was fortunately so placed that, without being seen, I could see what took place in the next room; and I commanded a particularly good view of the cabinet, in one of the drawers of which the marked money was deposited. "Now," I thought to myself, "I shall find out who the thief really is." Whoever the person was in the next room, he or she seemed in no great hurry to commence operations. His or her figure was hidden from me by the high back of Mr. Dunstanley's writing table. Presently, however, I heard footsteps cautiously advancing. It was a man, who had evidently just left his bed; his feet were bare, and over his nightshirt he wore a gorgeous dressing gown; and in his hand he carried a hand lamp with a reflector. Fortunately the dark side was towards me. He knelt down by the cabinet; the light fell full upon his features: to my horror I recognised my host's son, Charles Dunstanley. He took a key out of his pocket. All was quiet save the dreadful laboured breathing of the unhappy young man. He was going to insert the key in the lock of the drawer, when I gave a yawn. He instantly dropped the key out of his hand. He would have dropped the lamp, but that, fortunately, he had set it down on the ground. He turned towards me, livid as death, thick drops of perspiration standing on his discoloured brow. "My dear Charles," I said, "it is very imprudent of you to be going about the house at this time of night. Let me help you to your room; you must have been walking in your sleep, I fear." At the same time I quietly picked up the key and put it in my pocket. He said not a word; but, for a short time, remained looking at me with an expression of horror on his face. "You won't tell my father?" at last he panted out; for his breathing was becoming every

moment more distressed. "Time enough," my answer was, "to talk about that to-morrow. I think that I shall advise your father to let someone sleep in your room; for to wander about with bare feet at this time of night is, to one in your state of health, dangerous. Come, let me help you to your room." I took hold of his arm; he snatched it from me rather roughly. "Thanks, I can find my way myself." I thought it best to leave him, but I need scarcely say I did not take off my clothes till I had heard him go by, his breath still painfully laboured, to his own room. Fortunately Mr. Dunstanley slept on the other side of the house, or we might have disturbed him. I sat quiet for about ten minutes, thinking over the unhappy discovery I had made. This wretched young man had evidently been robbing the most loving and indulgent of fathers for the sake of a worthless woman, who had enthralled him heart and soul. I remembered then that in all the club gossip, however ill-natured, I had heard about Charles Dunstanley, there had never been any story which attributed to the young man anything worse than folly and extravagance. He had been the victim of many schemers, male and female, but I had never heard of one case in which he had been the victimiser. I considered that I ought to tell his father what I had discovered; and yet I felt that it was a duty too cruel even for a lawyer to fulfil. However I was too tired to think anything more on the subject then; so I undressed as quickly as I could, and got into bed. I never could bear a light in my room when I slept, but it was my invariable habit to put a candle and a match box close to the bedside. This I did as usual; blew out my light, and, in spite of the painful scene I had just gone through and the more painful reflections thereon, I was soon asleep.

How long I slept I do not know; but I was awoke suddenly by the noise of someone moving about my room. It was a large bedroom, and the fire which had been lighted on the previous evening was not yet quite out. There was not sufficient light for me to distinguish any object. I listened again, and saw that there was someone moving across the room. I stretched out my hand to the match box, and opened it; there was only one match left. I took it out and struck it on the box. I could not make it light at first, but at last I succeeded, and by the faint light I distinguished a figure crouching down close to the dressing table. Just as I was putting the match to the candle it went out, and I was again in darkness. I suppose that my nerves must have been unstrung, owing to what I had gone through in that eventful night; for the terror that I experienced in the next minute or so seemed to last for hours. I was conscious that the figure was advancing towards the bed, and yet I had no

power to escape. I had no weapon of any kind with which to defend myself. I can never convey to you any idea of the horror that thrilled through me, as I felt an icy cold hand grasping my throat. Then the point of some cold, sharp weapon struck me just below the neck. The next minute a warm stream of blood seemed to pour over my chest, and I heard a sound like the fall of some heavy body on the floor by the bedside. Then I became unconscious.

* * * * * *

When I came to myself, there was a light in the room; and I recognised Wilson standing at the foot of the bed with an expression of horror on his face. I saw that my nightshirt and the sheet, which was partly over my breast, were both covered with blood. I believe I must have screamed before I fainted; for Wilson, whose room was further down the passage, had been roused by a scream. At first he thought I was dead, and horror at the sight had paralysed him. I got out of bed; and the first object I saw on the floor was the body of poor Charles Dunstanley. Pale and trembling, we lifted him up; he was quite dead.

We laid him on the bed, and tried every means to restore him to life, but in vain. As I was raising his head, in order that Wilson might bathe his forehead more easily, I felt, among the bed-clothes under him, some hard object—it was a small dagger. I took the opportunity of Wilson's back being turned for a moment to conceal it beneath the pillow, and, fortunately, he never knew the discovery I had made. The cause of death was soon pretty clear: Charles Dunstanley had broken a blood-vessel in the very act of attempting to murder me. The latter detail was one that I only knew; I am happy to say no one but yourself, to this day, ever knew it.

The wound inflicted on me by the unhappy young man was so slight that it was easily concealed. I have the dagger, which I shall always keep; but neither his father nor Wilson ever saw it. Mr. Dunstanley believed that his son, feeling himself worse, came to my room for assistance; and that, as he was trying to rouse me, a large blood-vessel had suddenly given way, and that he died of the hemorrhage before any help could be summoned. I alone knew that the wretched young man must have come to my room with the half insane idea of taking my life, and of so destroying the sole evidence of the crime into which his infatuation had led him.

It was to supply the wants of Liddie May that he had robbed his father of those various sums; and I have not the slightest doubt that Wilson was totally innocent of any complicity in his guilt. Devoted to his young master, he had consented to receive letters directed

under cover of his name, and to post various letters for Charles Dunstanley directed in his own handwriting. I believe there was nothing that his young master could have asked him to do that he would not have done, short of any crime.

We broke the news to my dear old friend and client as gently as we could; but he never recovered the blow. In less than three years from the tragical end of his son he himself died, and the estates passed to a distant relation.

I made it my business, when I returned to London, to visit Miss Liddie May. She had read of poor Charley's death in the papers. To do her justice, I must say she seemed most sincerely distressed at his loss. I was, as you may imagine, inclined to be tolerably severe with her. She confessed that she had for some time indulged in betting transactions. Someone, who had the very best information, kindly gave her tips; and she was always backing horses which never succeeded even in being placed. I am not a betting man myself, but, if I were, I should certainly bet against every horse which those "who know all about it" assure you will win. As far as my experience goes, excepting those immediately connected with the stable to which a horse belongs—and they never once in a blue moon, except by accident, ever tell you the truth—there is no class of persons who are less able to give you any trustworthy advice as to any race, about which there is the slightest doubt, than those knowing persons who pass the greater part of their existence in the society of racing and betting men. However this may be, Miss Liddie certainly never had succeeded in pulling off any great or small event. She lived in the hope of doing so some day; but, meanwhile, her losses had to be paid, and the money was supplied by poor Charles Dunstanley; by what means you now know. When I told her that he had been robbing his father to pay her gambling debts, she seemed genuinely shocked; she declared that she never knew but that the money was his own, believing that he had "any amount of coin," and, when she did pull off a big thing, she fully intended to pay him back. How true this may be I do not know; but I left her in a state of what seemed to be genuine sorrow; and I must say that the result of my interview was a conviction that the devil—even when of the female sex—is not quite so black as he's painted.

There, my dear fellow, you have my most sensational experience; and I assure you that I never take a box of matches to light my bedroom candle with, but I feel a shudder as I recall that terrible incident of

"The Last Match."

A Sorry Finish.

By Augustus Harris.

It was a frightful night; the wind was blowing and the rain coming down in torrents; yet the streets were full of people hurrying to and fro. The crowds outside the London theatres were getting larger and larger every minute, but nowhere was so dense and surging a crowd to be seen as that which literally besieged "Old Drury." It was Boxing-night, and anticipations were running high concerning the new pantomime and all the unknown marvels and splendours belonging to it which had been promised to the public. The pit entrance in Russell Street was so thronged as to completely block up the foot-way, and all around a multitude of umbrellas of all sorts and sizes were moving like a wave over the swaying mass of people, who were shouting, yelling, crying, singing, and pushing. The entrance leading to "Vinegar Yard," where Jim Taylor had lived for years in a garret on the topmost floor of No. 6, and was now lying at death's door, was completely barred by the vast quantity of people who were struggling to gain admittance to the gallery. Jim Taylor was a stage-hand, and had been engaged in the theatre since he was a boy; and he was a favourite with everybody, from the manager to the "super." No more obliging, civil, or kind-hearted fellow had ever passed through the stage-door, and not a man, woman, or child in the theatre had ever been known to speak a word against him. He had often shared his dinner with some poor "super," and all the children who had been engaged in the various pantomimes always knew they had a friend in Jim.

But ever since the death of poor Minnie Johnson, however much he contributed to the promotion of happiness in others, he certainly never seemed cheerful himself, and his face wore a sad, set expression indicative of some "trouble of the brain." The poor girl's death had been a terrible blow to him, and Melancholy had become his chief companion. The change that had come over his life was very marked; he had been gradually sinking into a despondent condition, and had at last become the victim of some

wasting disease, which, although the doctors did not seem to understand, those who knew him best attributed to the inward workings of a grief which was breaking his heart.

This was the first Boxing-night since he had entered the theatre that he had not been at his post on the stage. For days past he had been getting weaker and weaker, and his state had become so critical during the last four-and-twenty hours that the doctor had forbidden him to receive any of the many visitors who had flocked to his bedside since it was known he was dangerously ill. Nevertheless, many of his admirers and well-wishers would not be denied, and all day long, in spite of the doctor's orders, a stream of friends continued to call, leaving behind them some trivial present or kind word of sympathy and encouragement. Everywhere about the room could be seen fruit, sweet smelling flowers, and other delicate tokens which plainly showed how the sick man was esteemed by his fellow-employés and acquaintances. But all this—intended to soften and soothe the agony of the sufferer, and to shed a ray of light on the darkest hour of his existence—appeared only to intensify his pain. Everything had been done for him that could be done; and when Dr. Smith, who prided himself on being the honorary and official adviser of the theatre, found his skill unavailing he brought one of the most eminent among the medical faculty to see his patient. Matters, however, only grew worse. When the doctor called that evening he was much annoyed to find his instructions had been disobeyed, for these frequent visits from day to day had had a very bad effect on Jim, who was now in a most desperate state and at times quite delirious. Jim knew that he was dying.

Minnie Johnson was the daughter of one of the "dressers"; she had been engaged in many pantomimes; had, so to speak, grown up in the place, and was at last promoted to the ballet. She was one of the best dancers and prettiest figures in the theatre and about eighteen years of age. Her eyes were beautifully bright and sparkled with intelligence; her hair was long, plentiful, and fair; and her rosy cheeks and perfect complexion required no rouge pot. Her hands and feet were small and well-made, and her arch expression seemed to conspire with her pouting lips to tantalise Jim, who evidently had a sneaking affection for her, which she encouraged only by laughing at him. Jim appeared a great deal older than he really was, but he certainly was not a bad-looking

fellow. He did not mind Minnie's chaff so long as she would speak to him; in fact, nothing pleased him better than to run on errands or perform any other service she might ask of him. Jim had always been a confirmed Benedick—not that he did not admire the fair sex—but because he believed in having his liberty. He would shake his head and express astonishment whenever he saw any of his companions taken to book by their "better halves," who not unfrequently, so to speak, wore those nether garments which are sometimes denominated "inexpressibles." But, as it happens with most confirmed Benedicks who are caught at last, and when they least expect it, so it was with Jim, who now began to make himself very agreeable. His attire was as spruce as his income or credit would permit, and he showed the greatest anxiety to find favour in the eyes of Minnie. Every day he would visit the market at Covent Garden and purchase some choice flowers, considering himself well rewarded for his pains if she would only accept them. Minnie paid very little heed to the devotion of the man, who sometimes neglected his work to be near her. It was evident enough that this kind of thing could not go on without reaching a climax of some sort or other, and one day, after rehearsal, when Jim met Minnie Johnson alone on the staircase leading from her dressing-room, he asked her to become his wife. The girl looked at him with an expression of mingled astonishment and amusement, and then burst out in such a shout of laughter that it attracted the attention of the other "ladies of the ballet," who insisted upon knowing the cause of her merriment, and, having heard what had taken place, they all joined in a hilarious chorus which so alarmed poor Jim, who was deeply disappointed and crestfallen, that he fled precipitately down stairs. He resolved never to speak to Minnie again, and for two or three days kept away from her entirely; but her magnetic influence soon attracted him to the stage, where he would ensconce himself in the wings, to watch her at rehearsal. Minnie was not a bad-hearted girl, and when she heard that Jim was so low spirited over her unceremonious behaviour, she felt sorry she had acted so unkindly. One day seeing him behind a "wing," she slipped round to the back unobserved and, suddenly coming behind him, said in her sweetest voice, "Good morning, Jim. What are you doing there?" Jim drew himself up, grew very red in the face, then, turning his head away, he looked on the ground and answered, "Nothing." She then asked

him whether he was angry with her, and Jim, raising his head and with tears in his eyes, reproached her for her inconsiderate behaviour. Minnie was vexed to think she had hurt the poor fellow's feelings, and, offering her hand, asked him to forgive her. As her hand touched his, a thrill seemed to pass through his entire frame, and he stood holding it in both of his for some seconds. "Why, Minnie," he asked, "will you not be mine?" Minnie did not know what answer to make; she told him, however, that, although she liked him very much as a friend, she did not mean to marry; anyhow, not for the present, and that if she ever did wed it would be with a gentleman. "Yes," said Jim "one of those 'toffs' who will be kind to you for a time, and when they grow tired of you will leave you to the tender mercies of the world." Minnie did her best to bring this awkward interview to an end, but Jim would not let her go until she had promised to reconsider his offer. So they parted, and Jim went back to his work.

Once more he paid his daily floral tribute to Minnie, and again became her constant attendant, taking little note of the rebukes he received for neglecting his work. This went on for some time, till Minnie complained bitterly of his too persistent attentions, and she did all she could to elude him. If he was waiting at the stage-door she would escape through the front, or if he took his stand on one staircase she would cross through the paint-room and get down by another. Quite a little conspiracy was formed by Minnie and her companions to sell poor Jim, who was sent on many a wild-goosechase in consequence. He took it all good-naturedly enough, and did not seem to mind, until one night, as he was passing through the stage-door, a boy from Covent Garden market, left for Minnie, rolled in blue paper, a magnificent spray of flowers, which she wore that evening, giving Jim's offering to one of her friends. Jim was stung to the quick. He tried to hold his tongue, but at last he could bear it no longer, so he enquired of Minnie whose flowers she was wearing, and what she had done with those which he gave her. Minnie told him it was no concern of his, and, as regards his flowers, she did not want to be worried with them, any more than she did with his attentions.

The next night she received a splendid bouquet, and on the following one a basket of lovely flowers, and Jim, hearing of this, made up his mind to find out who was the sender of them.

He decided to watch, and that night he saw waiting for her at the stage-door a very handsome young fellow, with whom she went away on leaving the theatre, and who, as Jim discovered, was an officer in the Guards. From what he overheard, he understood that there was to be a supper at one of the restaurants, at which she and some of her friends were to be present. Jim became white with rage; his lip quivered, and his eyes flashed. As Minnie passed out, he made a move forward to speak to her; but she drew back and placed herself under the protection of the dashing and stalwart stranger, who bore her triumphantly away. Jim stood on the threshold as if transfixed: hatred, jealousy, revenge, despair, all seemed to blend their influence, and his face wore the aspect of a beaten and baffled man. Before he could recover himself, the hansom into which the pair got had disappeared, and she was gone. He went home that night and threw himself upon his bed, but was unable to sleep. As hour by hour went on, he tossed from side to side on his pillow, and when morning at last came he looked a perfect picture of wretchedness. He, however, resolved to pull himself together, go over to the theatre, and have it out.

The rehearsal was called for eleven o'clock, but Minnie had not yet arrived, and he waited for her in the passage leading to the stage. As she came in he tried to speak to her, but she passed by, thrusting away his hand indignantly, at the same time forbidding him, in angry accents, to speak to her again. A few passionate words were exchanged between them, and she left Jim standing alone, repulsed, and cut to the quick. He went about his work, and made no further attempt to speak to her. Minnie was very glad to get rid of his importunities, and it was presently reported that she was to be married to the "rich scion of a noble house." The pantomime was produced, and Minnie was given the place of honour in the transformation scene. She was covered with paste diamonds, flowers, and silver gauze, and formed the central figure of the beautiful fairy picture, which was the talk of all London. On the fourth night of the pantomime, to the great horror of all present, one of the invisible wires, by which she was suspended, beautifully calm and motionless in the air, gave way; the second wire immediately snapped, and she was hurled headlong some forty feet into the cellar beneath. When she was picked up she was still alive, but terribly maimed and

to all appearance dying. Jim was by her side immediately, almost frantic with despair, and when she gained consciousness and recognised him, as well as her frightful injuries would permit her, she uttered a word of thanks for his assistance. The poor girl was taken home, and for three weeks she lingered, enduring all the while agony of an indescribable character. Jim left his work, and gave up his time to rendering her whatever services he could; but in that short period his hair became blanched and white as snow! His eyes were sunken into his head, and he was reduced to the shadow of his former self. Death came to the relief of Minnie, and ever since that day matters went worse and worse with Jim. Although everybody wished him well on account of his unexampled devotion to the poor girl, and sympathised sincerely with him for the loss he had sustained, yet day by day he exhibited all the signs of failing health, and was at last compelled to take to his bed. As he lay there on this Boxing-night at the point of death, and just as the overture across the way had finished, and the curtain was rising to reveal to eager eyes the beauteous scenes of another pantomime, Jim Taylor rose up in his bed, his hair standing almost upright, and his eyes fearfully dilated, and exclaimed, in accents choked by the final struggle: "Great God forgive me. 'Twas I! 'Twas I! I who cut the wire!" He fell back dead, and all was over.

Our Musical-Box.

THE musical events of conspicuous interest which came off during the past month were the first London production of Sullivan's "Golden Legend" at the Albert Hall, and the series of operatic performances given at Her Majesty's by a French scratch company. I was not fortunate enough to hear the cantata, which drew an audience ten thousand strong to the largest and ugliest of English concert-rooms, and cannot therefore express any opinion relative to its merits as a composition. Several excellent musicians of my acquaintance who attended its performance on the 15th ult. have assured me that it is a work of exceptional beauty—which I do not doubt, as I hold its composer incapable of writing unlovely music—and that it was surpassingly well rendered by soloists, chorus, and orchestra alike. Madame Albani's part laid a heavy strain upon her voice, owing to the height of its pitch, but she sang it most gallantly and effectively throughout. Mrs. Patey and Mr. Lloyd both surpassed themselves, and Mr. Barnby's admirable choir covered itself with glory. All the journalistic authorities whose opinion is worth having predict a long and prosperous career to the "Golden Legend," which, according to their accounts of it, is destined to enhance the reputation of Sir Arthur Sullivan as the first of living English composers.

M. Mayer's experiment at the great house in the Market has been less successful than, in some respects, it deserved to be, owing to the serious nature of its shortcomings with relation to scenery, appointments, chorus singers, and instrumentalists. All these were either positively or comparatively bad, and, worst of all, the *chef d'orchestre* displayed a painful and bewildering incapacity for keeping touch with his feeble or erratic subordinates. On the other hand, some of M. Mayer's "principals" were accomplished vocalists, and nearly all of them excellent actors. A more intelligent and interesting impersonation of Marguerite than that of Madame Fidés-Devries has never been seen on a London stage; and the gentlemen who sustained the *rôles* of Faust and Mephistopheles, though somewhat portlier in figure than beseemed an ardent lover and a denying spirit, left little to be desired as far as their singing and acting were concerned. The feats of the chorus in the way of what the Germans call "detonation" were of unexampled turpitude; there is not an operetta management in London which would venture to assault its patrons' ears with such abominable untunefulness. Happily for the *impresa*, those gathered together within the walls of Her Majesty's on the occasion I refer to belonged to the patient and long-suffering category of music-lovers. An Italian audience would have hooted and pelted the

offending chorists off the stage, and called the manager a dozen times before the curtain to hurl at him the somewhat contradictory epithets of "assassin" and "executioner." We take managerial outrages more coolly in these brumous isles than they do in the sunny south—too coolly, I am inclined to think, in respect to applause as well as to condemnation. Our operatic audiences rarely accord any recognition whatsoever to the most brilliant and effective "points" made by singers and actors with whom they happen to be unfamiliar. They allow to pass unnoticed sparkles of genius that would bring down the house in Paris, Rome, or Madrid, either through lack of attention or through the obstinate conservatism that induces so many English people to condemn—or, at the very least, to undervalue—anything that they regard as an innovation. Madame Galli-Marié's superb performance of the title-*rôle* in Carmen—by far the finest ever heretofore witnessed in this country—afforded a dozen instances of the strange impassiveness with which British audiences receive striking revelations of dramatic ability. To a few—but a very few, judging by the evidence of eye and ear—of those present, the gifted French *prima-donna* (for whom Bizet wrote the part of Carmen, and to whom he himself taught it) imparted sensations of the keenest and most exquisite pleasure by a rendering of the part that is at once delicately dainty and stirringly vigorous, and must, moreover, have been absolutely new to the vast majority of the spectators. But some of the best things she did—her ingenious displays of coquetry, for instance, in the first act, and her fascinating tricks in the dancing episodes of Act II.—failed to elicit a single outburst of applause. The house, too, was thinly attended, whereas I had expected that musical London would have thronged it to see a great artist perform a part which she originally created—the leading part in an opera firmly and deservedly established in public favour. A satisfactory feature in the representation of "Carmen," as given by M. Mayer's company, was the omission of Micaëla's superfluous and rather tedious song in Act III., usually sung when she emerges from the smugglers' cave with every reason for keeping as quiet as possible that could suggest itself to a timid and virtuous girl. I have observed that this song, though pretty enough in itself, invariably bores the audience, who take little interest in Micaëla, and, on the whole, "wish she wouldn't." Its excision has always struck me as desirable, and I hope that the Mapleson and Carl Rosa managements will follow the judicious example set them a fortnight ago at Her Majesty's Theatre. The part of Carmen, I cannot help thinking, might have been strengthened considerably and with advantage in the third act of the opera. Bizet missed a fine dramatic opportunity when he omitted, at the close of the fortune-telling episode, to write a powerful *scena* for his fate-striken heroine, the text of which might have appropriately been a self-tormenting retrospect of her wasted life, terminating in a (musically) florid outbreak of characteristic recklessness and devilry. To return to the French performance of "Carmen." Madame Galli-Marié is *facilis principessa* of all the Carmencitas I have ever seen or heard; M. Duchesne (Don José) is a

magnificent actor who rarely sings in tune ; M. Devries (Escamillo) has been endowed by nature with a superb voice, but not with dramatic talent of a high order ; the rest of the cast, as singers and actors, are not worthy of any special mention. But one thing must be said in praise of them, one and all. They speak their words, whether set to music or not, quite admirably. In a theatre far too large for them, and only half filled —a disadvantage against which they all struggled heroically—every syllable that left their lips could be plainly heard and readily understood in every part of the house. English operatic singers, and actors too, *exceptis excipiendis*, might, with great profit to themselves and comfort to their hearers, take a lesson or two in distinctness of utterance and effective delivery from these Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, who give the authors of *libretti* a chance of being understood and appreciated that is seldom accorded to them in this country.

The three Richter Autumn concerts presented n . extraordinarily salient feature of novelty, but attracted their accustomed audiences, excepting on the evening of Lord Mayor's Day, which had been injudiciously selected as the date of one of these excellent entertainments. A good many of Dr. Richter's staunchest supporters, even of the out-and-out Wagnerian order, were deterred from visiting St. James's Hall on the 9th of November by the Socialist bugbear and by just apprehension of the innumerable roughs drawn to Regent Street by the illuminations in honour of the Prince of Wales's birthday. I hear that Dr. Richter has at length transferred the business arrangements of his musical undertakings in this country to Messrs. Chappell and Co. Single-hearted and unsophisticated as is this great musician, his friends—amongst whom I am proud to be reckoned—could not wish his interests to be confided to safer or kindlier hands. Had the House of Chappell been Hans Richter's business "guide, philosopher, and friend" ever since he made his first professional venture in this metropolis, he would by this time be a rich man. He would be the first, I am sure, with respect to past mishaps, to say "Let bygones be bygones." I will therefore refrain from harking back to the losses brought upon him by his own over-trustfulness, and confine my remarks upon the new arrangement to heartily congratulating him upon its conclusion. "*Tout vient à bout pour qui sait attendre*," says the sagacious French saw; and I do not despair of seeing the champion Kapellmeister of Europe a *rentier* on a large scale one of these days. A similar future, I sincerely trust, awaits that accomplished musician Mr. George Henschel, the opening concert of whose new-born enterprise went off very well. He has, at least, secured himself from actual pecuniary loss by founding his undertaking upon the solid basis of an ample Guarantee Fund, which, moreover, ensures him a free hand in the organisation of his entertainments and choice of his artists.

Amongst the musical novelties of the past month to which I desire to draw the attention of the readers of The Theatre is a famous Jubilee

Song, the stirring words of which, by Clement Scott, are wedded to congenial music from the pen of that brave old composer, Henry Russell. The poem, every line of which breathes fervent patriotism and enthusiastic loyalty to the august Lady who inspired it, was first published in last month's issue of this magazine, and its high merits have already found cordial recognition in the columns of the daily press. The melody is a vigorous one, easily to be remembered, and lending itself, as is the duty of all patriotic songs, to the cheery custom of "joining in chorus" still affected by a large class of the British public. "Our Empress Queen" (Weekes and Co., 16, Hanover Street) bears upon its title-page a pleasing portrait of Her Most Gracious Majesty, which cannot but add to the popularity this excellent song is bound to attain. Another patriotic song, "The Union of the Empire," by Messrs. Stevenson and Paupiah, has recently been published by Messrs. Willcocks and Co., of Berners Street. Its text does not, however, allude to the approaching jubilee, and savours slightly of party politics, being apparently written in the Conservative interest. Mr. Paupiah's share in this work is a thought too commonplace in character to catch the public ear and hold it. I have heard of yet a third patriotic song, intituled "Victoria's Jubilee," composed in the early part of last month by Mr. Leonhard Bach, and sung with great success at Windsor; but the name of the publisher has not reached my cognisance. I may mention that the humorous Scotch song—wholly unintelligible to the benighted Sassenach, but none the less funny on that account—with which Mr. Ramsey Danvers made all London laugh itself sore last May at the Avenue Theatre, has been "adapted and arranged" for voice and piano by Mr. George Beddie, and published in Glasgow by Joseph Ferrie. The lilting tune is in itself irresistibly provocative of mirth, and the words, read with the aid of a glossary, are doubtless no less so. The name of this song is "Ta Clerk in ta Offish," and its refrain runs as follows (I wish I understood Gaelic!):—

> Wi' my hi hu honel an' my honel hu hi,
> Camlachie, Auchtermuchty, Ecclefechan, and Milngavie;
> She's a praw lad, ta clerk in ta offish.

"RHODA."

On Saturday, November 13, at the Comedy Theatre (first time at this house), an entirely new and original comic opera, in three acts. Libretto by Walter Parke. Music composed by Antonio L. Mora. Conductor, Mons. Auguste Van Biene.

Peter Bosco	Mr. C. H. Kenney.	Ventro	Mr. Harry Martell.
Carlos Valdez...	Mr. Deane Brand.	Grillo	Mr. Compton Coutts.
Baron Poncho	Mr. J. B. Ashley.	Rhoda	Miss Kate Chard.
Adolphe Martel	Mr. Henry Walsham.	Teresa	Miss Agnes Oliver.

But for the excellent singing of Miss Chard and Mr. Deane Brand, I fancy that the above "comic opera" (I quote the bill while disagreeing with it) would scarcely have met with the favourable reception accorded to it on the occasion of its production at the Comedy Theatre. It was originally, as I understand, brought out at Croydon some time ago, and had done well in the provinces before its proprietors conveyed it to London, deeming it strong enough to run upon metropolitan boards. In this view of "Rhoda" I cannot conscientiously concur. The music, here and there pretty enough, lacks originality and vigour of construc-

tion; the dialogue is vexatiously diffuse; the youngest of the jokes had attained maturity about the date of the Peace of Amiens. In these days of subtle and rich instrumentation, it is seldom given to the frequenter of musical entertainments to hear anything so thin and sketchy as Signor Mora's orchestration. Of the performance—always excepting the accomplished and tuneful vocalisation of the two artists referred to above—the less said the better. Mr. Walsham was out of voice; Mr. Martell's style of singing is better suited to a music-hall than to a theatre; the other gentlemen engaged for lyrical parts had manifestly mistaken their vocation. The audience on the opening night impressed me as being less critical than was altogether creditable to their musical taste. They displayed no wish to redemand the best number of the whole "opera"—a melodious and fairly dramatic duet in the third act—but enthusiastically encored a drivelling ditty with the offensive refrain of "Ighty tighty, tighty," which, had it obtained its deserts, would have been received in sorrowful silence. It was followed, I should add, by a deeply depressing dance. When this latter was also repeated, at the imperative request of the pit and gallery, the musical persons present felt that they had drained a bitter cup to the dregs, and sadly glided from the house.

CLAVICHORD.

Our Play-Box.

THE DRAMATIC STUDENTS.

The Sixth Performance given by the Dramatic Students at the Vaudeville Theatre, the 16th day of November, 1886, at 2.30, Goldsmith's Comedy,

"THE GOOD-NATURED MAN."

Honeywood	Mr. Eric Lewis.	Dubardieu	Mr. J. D. Bouverie.
Croaker	Mr. W. Luge.	Postboy	Mr. Fuller Mellish.
Lofty	Mr. Mark Ambient.	Servant	Mr. Bernard Gould.
Sir William Honeywood	Mr. G. R. Foss.	Miss Richland	Miss Norreys.
Leontine	Mr. J. Duncan Young.	Olivia	Miss Neva Bond.
Jarvis	Mr. Gilbert Trent.	Mrs. Croaker	Miss M. Ayrtoun.
Butler	Mr. H. Eversfield.	Garnet	Miss Lilian Carr.
Bailiff	Mr. H. H. Morell.	Landlady	Miss Mary Bessle.
Follower	Mr. C. Dodsworth.		

The sixth performance of the Dramatic Students on Tuesday, the 16th November, can scarcely be credited with the same successful result as has attended their former efforts. The cause of this is not difficult to find. The play of "The Good-Natured Man"—not to put too fine a point upon it—is tedious and dull. Modern audiences have no sympathy with a hero who spouts platitudes and spins out moralising sentiments by the yard; and the difference between Honeywood and young Marlow in "She Stoops to Conquer" may perhaps be taken as a very good reason why this first comedy of Oliver Goldsmith's is permitted to lie hidden on the shelf by the managers of the present day. Young Marlow is a man—a very human man into the bargain; but Honeywood is nothing more or less than a sententious preaching fool.

The second reason that this admirable body of young students did not succeed as well as their earnest endeavours merited must be put down to

their errors of judgment in casting the parts. Miss Norreys cannot actually fail in anything. She is too clever; but she certainly should not have undertaken the sentimental character of Miss Richland. It is not in her line; she has not the physique of emotional heroines. Her small figure and wonderfully expressive face lend themselves to the grave, quaint comedy touches with which she has already scored a marvellous reputation for so young an actress. Mr. Eric Lewis again did nothing to help the tiresome hero by his impersonation. Mr. Lewis is an entertainer and a comedian, and utterly out of place as the mawkish Honeywood; while Mr. G. R. Foss as the disguised uncle (a fac-simile of Sir Oliver Surface, by the way) gave a lifelike imitation of his late manager, Mr. Wilson Barrett, even to the intonation of the voice.

Of the more successful performances comes Mr. Charles Dodsworth first, who in the small part of the bailiff's follower, proved himself to be a most excellent and humorous actor, his quiet, artistically funny performance provoking the heartiest laughter and applause of the afternoon. Mr. Mark Ambient, too, had a very fair knowledge of the all-important Lofty though his personal appearance was rather that of a valet than a would-be fop and courtier. Mr. T. Duncan Young, apart from some affectations and a slightly effeminate voice (which he must alter without delay), bore himself with ease and much grace, which can hardly be said of the rest of his companions. Mr. W. Lugg as Croaker, the typical blusterer of old comedy, was too loud and emphatic; his wife, Miss Margaret Aytoun, too simpering. Mrs. Croaker has to laugh as heartily and as much as Lady Teazle, and a natural laugh is one of the most difficult tricks of the dramatic art. As for the others, their acting calls for no remark save that the earnestness which was the foundation of this society was not lacking, and that one and all did their best in their respective parts.

Before concluding, it would be well to point out to these young enthusiasts the mistake they make in not studying the different effects of the individuality of the characters they represent. In other words, to devote some thought to "making up." There was scarcely one face, with perhaps the exception of Miss Norreys and Mr. Lewis, that was not ruined by the bad and unskilful use of the cosmetics; and even Miss Norreys blundered in covering her own lovely red locks with such a hideous white wig. Miss Richland would in all probability have worn her own hair, and nothing could have looked prettier than Miss Norreys auburn curls, with the picturesque and becoming yellow gown she carried with such dainty grace. E. R

Our Omnibus-Box.

Let me once more return to the new life of "Samuel Phelps," which contains so much valuable material, but so many heterodox opinions. It is really astonishing that a valuable biography should be marred by such indefensible arguments as are used in regard to the relation of Phelps with his critics, and his contempt for criticism in any form, good or bad. I am perfectly certain that "whatever was written of him was unbiassed by friendship, and in no way influenced by him," for I hold, and have ever held, that criticism in England is fairer and more independent than that of any other country in the world. But to say that the entire Press was kept at arm's length at Sadler's Wells was to say what is absolutely inaccurate. Mr. May Phelps knows perfectly well that the partner of Samuel Phelps at Sadler's Wells was one of the most companionable and loveable men in the world, dear old Tom Greenwood. Did *he* keep the Press at arm's length? Did *he* do nothing to welcome the critics of those days to Sadler's Wells? Do the biographers of Samuel Phelps maintain that Phelps and Greenwood, separate or apart, never exchanged words with Oxenford, or E. L. Blanchard, or Tomlins, or Bayle Bernard, or Stirling Coyne, or Heraud, or Leicester Buckingham. Why, Greenwood was one of the most intimate friends of dear old Blanchard. They wrote plays and pantomimes together! On what possible evidence can it be said that the critics of those days were kept at "arm's length" at Sadler's Wells! Why are such strange mis-statements ever written? I can myself personally testify that it was not so, for I mixed with them all at Sadler's Wells many a time and oft. But I would take the present word of E. L. Blanchard, Jonas Levy, Richard Lee, or Joseph Knight, on that point, and contradict the assertion without hesitation. What is the good of attempting to prove that criticism must be dishonest because critics know actors? What is the use of arguing that men, with experience of the stage, trained to taste plays, who have been all their lives in the theatre watching audiences and studying effect, can only be trusted to tell the truth or to express their candid opinion when they are kept at "arm's length" by a prominent actor of their time. I myself believe and unhesitatingly assert that the critics of the Sadler's Wells mixed in theatrical society as much as we do now and *must do* if we are to do our business properly. Its chicken and champagne is not always so pleasant as people make out. But the stout and sandwiches of

Sadler's Wells had no more effect upon the dramatic critics of 1856 than does chicken and champagne on those of 1886.

But old Tom Greenwood, who was the factotum of Samuel Phelps, no more kept the Press at arm's length than does Bram Stoker, the indefatigable factotum of Irving at the Lyceum. There was no need to do so then. There is no need to do so now. The biographers of Samuel Phelps "protest too much." If it be true that Phelps "never courted literary cliques" or pandered to the Press: if it be accurate to say that he seldom read anything that was said for or against him, why then do his biographers fill their book with extracts from press criticism, ranging from John Oxenford and Henry Morley down to the "Islington Gazette?" Why do they make such a fuss about the matter, and regret with sensitive scorn anything that was honestly said *against* their fine old friend? What is the good of saying that because Phelps never "pandered to the Press" "consequently its more ignoble members and perky little whipsters, when he played at Drury Lane in 1865, penned words of disparagement, *when they dared*, and called it independent criticism?" Surely we have the cloven foot peeping out here. Why should a man who habitually kept the Press "at arm's length" care for the "ignoble members" of the profession he never recognised, or for the "perky whipsters" whom he despised? It is all nonsense. Phelps was as fairly and temperately judged by the critics of his time as by those of any other age or period. It was quite possible to admire his very remarkable talent, and to appreciate his great gifts without swallowing at one gulp everything he did. For my own poor part, I have ever considered him one of the most admirable comedians of our time, and in certain characters, such as Richelieu, absolutely without a rival. Would, indeed, that I could see again his Wolsey, his Malvolio, his Job Thornbury, in "John Bull," his Bertuccio, in "A Fool's Revenge," his Bully Bottom, but if I were to be shot for it to-morrow I should not care to see ever again his Hamlet or his Othello.

Miss Mary Moore, whose photograph appears in this number, has not been on the stage two years, but she has already made herself a favourite with a large section of the playgoing public of London by her impersonation of the Quakeress in Mr. Charles Wyndham's recent revival at the Criterion Theatre of O'Keefe's comedy, "Wild Oats." Her acting of this part was distinguished by much natural charm, delicacy, and sweetness. Miss Moore's first appearance on the stage was made in March, 1885, as a member of Mr. Wyndham's "Candidate" company. In the adaptation of "Le Député de Bombignac" she played Lady Oldacre, and, afterwards, Lady Dorothy. In October of the same year she came to London, playing Lady Oldacre at the Criterion. Her next part was Mary in "Cupid in Camp,"

"If I offend you not, 'tis praise enough."

ADDISON.

Mary Moore.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD 263, OXFORD STREET, W.

"Every man is the son of his own works."

CERVANTES.

Austin Brereton

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE THEATRE" BY BARRAUD, 263, OXFORD STREET, W.

and she afterwards acted successfully as the bride in "The Man with Three Wives." But, as yet, her most ambitious attempt in comedy has been Ada Ingot in the recently revived "David Garrick," a sweet and sympathetic character which she has invested with her accustomed gentleness and charming manner.

Austin Brereton, the subject of our second photograph, was born at Liverpool on July 13, 1862, being the eldest and fourth surviving son of William F. Brereton. His father belongs to an old Cheshire family, his mother to a Lancashire one. He was educated at the College of St. Francis Xavier, Liverpool, which establishment he left when thirteen and a-half years of age. To the teaching of the Jesuit Fathers there he attributes much of his success in his literary efforts, but he is also greatly indebted to his mother, whose love of literature he inherits. Immediately on leaving college, he entered the office of Messrs. Reynolds and Gibson, one of the largest, most distinguished, and most honourable firms of cotton brokers in existence. There he served an apprenticeship of five years, working hard and gaining much valuable business knowledge. Before his apprenticeship was over he had taken to the pen of the journalist, and had written on art and the drama, in London and local journals, for two years before completing his engagement in the cotton office. Oddly enough, his first contribution, a brief letter on the portraits in "Hamlet," appeared, in May, 1879, in The Theatre. Since October, 1881, he has cordially assisted the Editor of this Magazine. Leaving Liverpool in July of the year last mentioned, he came to London, and was immediately appointed dramatic critic to "The Stage," a position which he still holds. He has edited "Dramatic Notes," an illustrated year-book of the stage, of which he is now the proprietor, since 1880, and he has been a frequent contributor to The Theatre magazine during the last six years. He successfully originated and worked a scheme of telegraphing to country papers on important first nights, a scheme which was broken up in the autumn of 1883, when he visited America for the purpose of witnessing Mr. Irving's first appearances there. He has generally confined himself in his writing to dramatic notices, biographies of actors, and other subjects pertaining to the stage. He is at present engaged upon an important book, which, it is hoped, will be ready for publication early next spring. His works already published are:—"Henry Irving, a Biographical Sketch," 1883; "Some Famous Hamlets, from Burbage to Fechter," 1884; and, "Shakespearean Scenes and Characters," 1886.

The admirable note by Mr. Moy Thomas on the subject of the play, "David Garrick," ought to be preserved for future reference, for

here we find much useful and valuable information packed up in a very small parcel :—" The history of the late Mr. Robertson's 'David Garrick' is curious enough to deserve a note. The play is an acknowledged version of De Melesville's 'Sullivan,' one of a long series of dramas turning upon the same idea, which was described by Théophile Gautier as 'the everlasting story of Garrick, Talma, or Kean curing some foolish girl of a passion for them as actors by exhibiting themselves in private life under the most repulsive conditions.' This description occurs in a criticism by Gautier in 1842 on a vaudeville called 'Le Docteur Robin,' which happens to be the original of the little piece called 'Doctor Davy,' in which Mr. Hermann Vezin has won renown. Gautier further tells us that this piece was based on a story by his friend and comrade of the famous 'Gilet-rouge' fraternity, Joseph Bouchardy, and that seven or eight playwrights had at that time already laid their hands upon it. We have been at some pains to trace the story here referred to, and have found it in a novelette entitled 'Garrick Médicin,' published in Paris in an obscure weekly paper, called 'Le Monde Dramatique,' in April, 1836. Somewhere about the same time M. Fournier produced a one-act piece called 'Tiridate,' which is founded on the same notion; the only difference being that in this case it is not an actor, but an actress, who, at the sacrifice of dignity and personal inclinations, undertakes the weaning process. It was in this piece that Mr. Charles Reade found the substance of his novelette and play entitled 'Art,' wherein Mrs. Stirling has so often played the part of the heroine, Mrs. Bracegirdle. Several other versions of 'Tiridate' hold the stage, thanks to the energies of Mrs. John Wood, Miss Genevieve Ward, and other impersonators of the heroine; and traces, more or less distinct, of the dramatic idea worked out in 'Garrick Médecin' are to be found in numerous modern pieces. Mr. Robertson's play was produced at the Haymarket in the summer of 1864, with Mr. Sothern as Garrick, Miss Nelly Moore as the love-sick and stage-struck heroine, and Mr. Buckstone as Squire Chivy. It has, we are aware, been said that 'Sullivan,' the direct original of 'David Garrick,' was itself merely a translation of a German play; but in this there is, we believe, some confusion of fact. The German play referred to is probably Deinhardstein's 'Garrick in Bristol.' Of this piece we are not able, unfortunately, to give any account; but it is certain that there is an acknowledged translation of Melesville's 'Sullivan,' by the dramatist Edouard Jermann, which is well known on the German stage—a fact which would be hardly possible if 'Sullivan' had been only a Frenchman's version of a German play."

A most pleasant hour or two of quiet recreation may be passed during the winter season in the well-lighted rooms of the Hanover Gallery, New Bond Street, where Messrs. Hollender and Cremetti have gathered together a collection of oil and water-colour paintings

calculated to afford the art student much agreeable thought and valuable instruction. We most especially use the latter word in speaking of the strangely original study by Signor Enrico Crispi, entitled "A Lesson in Anatomy," which naturally enough forms a prominent feature of the present exhibition. Unfortunately, however, the mere title of Signor Crispi's work prevents many of us from judging its unquestionable merits with minds wholly free from preconceived feelings of personal prejudice and dislike. Imaginative temperaments will, in all probability, create for themselves a vivid representation upon canvas of the horrors to be encountered in the surgery and dissecting room; whilst others, strongly allied to the more agreeable phases of human science, will argue—and for the moment not without some reason in so doing—the practical impossibility of bringing pure and noble thoughts to bear upon a subject so distasteful as the one in question. Nevertheless, these and similar disputants, when brought face to face with Signor Crispi's work, will probably be the first to admit his reconcilement of the possible with the impossible in a manner which claims him an artist in the truest and best sense of the word. These lovers of the pure and beautiful will find nothing repugnant to their feelings in contemplating the draped figure of this fair-haired woman, calmly resting in the eternal sleep of death, which seems to have dulled by its dread presence the perceptions of the man standing nearest the slab on which she reposes, so recollected and devoid of any personal feeling is the look overshadowing every line of his face. Neither is the half-nervous, half-interested glance less admirably depicted on the countenance of his companion, as, with mind somewhat troubled with youthful pity for the dead, he stands waiting to receive the commands of his instructor in science. Apart from the unquestionably morbid subject with which Signor Crispi has thought fit to identify his talent, there is nothing in his delineation of the same which can justifiably arouse the disapprobation of the most scrupulous-minded amongst us, and how great homage to the artist's genius is implied in the above assertion can best be understood by those who deplore the way in which the moral influence of art is so often offered up in sacrifice to the representation of all that is most artificial and unpraiseworthy in human nature.

Let us now turn our attention for a few moments to other works in this gallery, worthy our careful criticism and abundant praise. Some charming specimens of landscape painting by Corot, Daubigny, and Stortenbeker first attract our notice, one by the last-named master, entitled "In the Downs," seeming almost to breathe forth upon us the fresh country air, gently stirring the rushes and waving grass which so richly close this wide stretch of mountain scenery—a place of peaceful pasturage for a group of meek-eyed cattle, guarded by a quaintly-attired peasant girl. "In the Fold," by Charles Jacques, is also quite a little gem of simple thought. Peeping into this quiet corner

of a farm-house barn—warmed by the rays of sunlight streaming through the chinks of the half-opened shutter—we are almost inclined to envy the cosy resting-place of this trio of white lambs, o'er whose well-being the watchful eye of the shepherd is oft directed, judging by the coat and hat hung against the wall, which silently seem to tell his speedy return. Two delightful studies by Diaz subsequently claim our passing attention, no less than a carefully worked-out representation of Eastern life by T. A. Bridgman, entitled "The Pacha and his Councillors." Words fail us in enumerating the marvellous shades of blue, orange, and red here brought to bear in perfect harmony one upon the other. An admirable likeness of Sara Bernhardt, by Bastien Lepage, rivets our notice upon grounds strangely differing from the last-mentioned work, so entirely has the artist here put on one side the aid of any definite colour in giving us the embodiment of one of the best-known women of the times. Yet the longer we look at this study the more forcibly we are brought to see how the master's hand has drawn, as it were, many colours out of one colour, so distinctly does the rich texture of the white velvet dress contrast with the paler lights thrown across the rug of the same tone, which are again cast into vividly opposing contrast by the dead white flowers, faintly indicated amidst the transparent folds of muslin encircling the throat of the gifted actress. Two more studies yet remain to claim from us something more than a passing glance as we close a cursory view of this most interesting little collection. "The Fisherwoman," by Lerolle, is nevertheless just one of those works most exquisitely satisfying to look upon, but withal most difficult to describe. A lonely, desolate stretch of sea, half enveloped in greyish mist; how strangely it seems to harmonise with the bent form of this poorly-clad woman, whose tattered garments are blown hither and thither by the pitiless wind as it sweeps over the grassy cliffs o'erhanging the vast space of measureless ocean. All is so bleak, so lonely, so still—earth, sea, and sky appear to unite in whispering us the oft-spoken tale of life's endless toil and labour; and does not the very simplicity of the scene reveal to our minds the artist's thoughts with tenfold power of sympathetic attraction? In like manner "The Widower," by Sonza Pinto, whispers to us in most tender manner of life beyond the grave, as we look upon this old man, gazing with calm, steadfast eyes towards the land, for him, not very far off. The reddish glow of the dying embers—seen between the bars of the quaintly-fashioned grate—momentarily arrest our glance, otherwise there is nothing to dispel the sadness of the gloaming hour, save the last rays of daylight which centre around the figure of the lonely watcher. The full sentiment of such works as the above can in no way be conveyed to our readers through the medium of pen and ink. We can but feeby enumerate the hidden treasures they contain, desiring that lovers of art should bestow on them the individual praise and attention they most unquestionably deserve.

On Thursday evening, the 19th inst., the Lyric Club opened its doors for its second general entertainment of the present season, and, to judge by the crowd that surged in the pretty rooms in New Bond Street, the Committee's hospitality was most warmly responded to. Everything that could be thought of to ensure comfort and pleasure to the fair guests was done by Mr. Robert Gardiner, Mr. George Power, who commenced proceedings with a song, delightfully sung, and Mr. Herbert George, and the complete success of the evening was due entirely to their exertions. If the Lyric Club's fame spreads more rapidly, or even as rapidly as it is doing now, it will be a serious consideration for the directors to know where they are to put the crowd when it arrives, for its popularity is so great that the invitations are always immediately accepted and eagerly anticipated. The witching hour of midnight saw the arrival of many an actor and actress who had just finished their night's work. Miss Marie Tempest, a vision of simplicity and prettiness, in a thick white silk gown, looking as if the word fatigue were unknown to her, assented gracefully and willingly to add her share to the performers, and sang, as she alone can sing, with purity and pathos power, yet exquisite finish. One never tires of hearing Miss Tempest, nor, indeed, Mr. Hayden Coffin, who gave as an encore the ever-popular "My Love and I," by Tosti, and could have remained singing on for an hour if the pangs of hunger would have allowed him. As it was, however, Mr. Coffin soon found his way upstairs to do justice, like everybody else, to the excellent supper. The other ladies who contributed songs were Miss Siedle, Miss Moody, Miss Rosa Leo, Miss Forster, and Miss Chaplin played delightfully on the violin. The dramatic portion was found in a recitation by Madam de Naucaze, who wore her pale yellow dress most regally, and received much applause, and in the Helen and Modus scene from "The Hunchback," given by Miss Norreys and Mr. Eric Lewis, who both demonstrated, by their amusing performance, that people will laugh, and laugh most heartily, at this old and well-worn duologue. Miss Dorothy Dene, in a picturesque green gown, with her sister were much admired; and Miss Janet Steer, so soon to become a member of a burlesque company, Miss Fortescue Harrison, Miss Carlotta Elliott, Miss Lucy Roche, and Miss Hope Temple may be picked out from the mass of literary, dramatic, and musical celebrities that filled the rooms. Altogether, the Lyric Club is to be congratulated on a successful and charming evening.

The first of Mr. P. J. Kirwan's autumn series of recitals to be given at the Marlborough Rooms, Regent Street, was graced on Saturday afternoon, November 13, by a fashionable attendance, and one in every way calculated to enter into the merits of the programme set before them, and to which the reciter's sonorous yet flexible voice and versatility in delivery enabled him to do, in almost all cases, full

justice. Mr. Kirwan chose as his opening item Clement Scott's heart-stirring and truly poetic "Story of a Coastguardman," and the admirable manner in which the noble and heroic conduct of Regan was described visibly affected all present. In "Edinburgh after Flodden" (Aytoun) the melancholy pathos of the disaster was excellently conveyed, and in the scene from Lord Lytton's "Richelieu," where Julie seeks shelter with the Cardinal, and the Churchman at length encircles her with the protection of the Church, a grandness and sense of power was thoroughly apparent. But it was in "Phœdra," taken from Lewis Morris's "Epic of Hades," that Mr. Kirwan most displayed his unquestionable talent. Phœdra's glory in her love for Hippolytus, her passion, her revenge, and her abandonment of despair when the Gods whom she cursed granted the fulfilment of her prayer to them, were portrayed in a manner that evidenced marked dramatic power and a true pathetic feeling. Bret Harte's "A Greyport Legend" and Jean Ingelow's "High Tide" were given in that homely yet tender manner that the subjects demand. There was a quaintness and irony in the rendering of Calverley's "On the Brink" and "Changed" that revealed a strong sense of humour in the reciter, which was further made apparent in Lucien Puech's "Le Monsieur qui n'aime rien," given in the original with an excellent accent, the blasé *nil admirari* tone being delightfully assumed. One of the "Sketches by Boz" ("Sentiment") brought the programme to a close, and enabled Mr. Kirwan to assume the various characters with a fairly happy effect, though he certainly missed the requisite pomposity of Cornelius Brooke Dingwall, Esq., M.P. Mr. Kirwan's memory is perfect, for during two hours' recitations he never referred to a book, and, save that there is a tendency to roll the letter "r" unduly, and in the "Greyport Legend," where *wan* was made to rhyme with *man*, and in "Le Monsieur," where a slip occurred, and *la* jeu was spoken of, the applause he gained was richly deserved.

The Paulatim A. D. C. gave one of their pleasant entertainments at St. George's Hall on Saturday, November 13, choosing as the *pièce de résistance* of the evening the comedy of Tom Taylor's, well loved by amateurs, 'Still Waters Run Deep," the first representation of which carries one back to May 14, 1855, when Alfred Wigan was the John Mildmay, in the palmy days of the Olympic. The play itself being so well known, it is necessary only to review how the different characters were represented, and it is a pleasure to say that seldom have they had better amateur exponents. *Place aux dames.* Miss Maud Strudwick, who undertook the part of Mrs. Hector Sternhold at very short notice, looked charming, and infused generally into its portrayal a just sufficiency of dictatorial manner with the amount of passion required in her scene with Hawksley. Miss Ivan Bristow was, as usual, excellent as the silly Miss Mildmay. John Mildway was played with ease and quiet force, and yet with no lack of energy, by Mr. J. M. Powell, but

he looked a little too young for the character. Mr. Arthur J. Frankish's Capt. Hawksley was possessed of just that veneer of a gentleman which so often passes for the solid material; the unblushing villainy of the bully was capitally rendered. Mr. J. Graham Slee made a capital doddering and fussy Potter, and Mr. J. M. Powell did much with the small part of Dunbilk. Messrs. H. Weeden Cooke, A. M. Lawrence, A. J. Waring, and R. Bristow (the latter being particularly good) respectively made good sketches of the parts of Langford, Markham, Gimlet, and Jessop. As a *lever de rideau* James T. Hurst's far-fetched but laughable comedietta, "Sugar and Cream," introduced Miss Knewsteb as the bewitching widow, Mrr. Mirfield, who almost reconciles the confirmed man about town to become a Benedict again, and quite captures the younger Wentworth. It was played in a bright, coquettish manner, and with just a nice touch of feeling. Mr. Sydney Leigh looked the character of the elder Wentworth, who loved the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall, and Mr. J. Grahame Slee was an average young man of the world. Miss P. Yorke made a good soubrette as Spruce. The Hanover Orchestra, under the conduct of Mr. Clampitt, discoursed sweet sounds during the evening; the overture, Suppé's "Poet and Peasant," was particularly well played. The hall was crowded.

The Royal Park Hall, Camden Town, was occupied on Monday, the 1st November, by the Jackdaw A. D. and M. Club, and though "jackdaws" are, as as rule, looked upon as endowed with anything but good qualities, on this occasion they proved themselves musical instead of discordant, and with a great deal of sense instead of idle chatter. To try their wings, they commenced the evening with a pretty little comedietta, by one of their own flight, known as T. D. McCord. It contains much tender billing and cooing between a young couple, one of whom, Jenny Hastings, was acted in a very natural and artless manner by Miss Tiny Bough. Her mate, Jack Trueman, a sailor lad, was well represented by Mr. Vere Woodman, and the undercurrent of the story is the reconciliation of two lovers, who had parted thirty years before through a foolish quarrel. The one, Colonel Percival, was done fair justice to by Mr. George A. Toplis, but Miss Lily Mitchell as Miss Graham was a very shy little Jackdaw. The plot, it will be seen, strongly resembles "Sweethearts"; but, with the exception of one or two speeches that might well be cut down, is smoothly and pleasantly written. The Jackdaws next took a higher flight, and, donning gay plumage, appeared in Goldsmith's comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer." Taken for all in all, they acquitted themselves fairly in their borrowed plumes. Mr. T. D. McCord was a hale, but rather prosy, Hardcastle, and drilled his servants well, amongst whom Mr. Fred Charles as Gregory shone conspicuously. Mrs. John Smith was a genuine Mrs. Hardcastle, vain and pretentious, a doting mother of Tony Lumpkin, the gist of

whose character Mr. Arthur Withers did not quite understand. Young Martin's bashful scene was capitally acted by Mr. D. Beveridge, but he was too modern in his style in his wooing of the disguised fair one. Miss Sybil Vane would have made a clever Miss Hardcastle had she spoken a little more slowly. Miss Phillis Nelson was piquante and attractive as Miss Neville, and her by-play was excellent. Mr. H. W. Smith looked a very handsome Hastings. The Jackdaw orchestra must certainly be commended for their excellent playing that very agreeably filled up the waits between the acts. Thanks to Mr. George A. Toplis's good stage management, these were not prolonged.

Miss Carlotta Leclercq recently gave a *matinée* at the Ladbroke Hall for the purpose of bringing forward several of her pupils, some of whom made on the occasion a first appearance. The programme consisted of the "tent scene" from the "Flowers of the Forest," "The Little Treasure," and the "scandal scene" from "The School for Scandal." In the first-named item Bess was charmingly played by Miss Alexis Porecky; Miss Ida Meller was a picturesque and effective Cynthia; and Lemuel was powerfully and pathetically enacted by Miss Ina Cassilis, whose *personnel* also was well fitted for the part. In "The Little Treasure" Miss Florrie Grahame made a very promising *début* as Gertrude; Miss Conway was a successful Lady Florence; Mr. Gibson looked the part of Sir Charles; and Mr. Heyrick was a capital Walter Maydenblush. Mrs. Middleton was allotted to Miss Lisa Leonards, who played not only with excellent finish, but in a true spirit of comedy, making the "little failings" of the mischief-maker stand out clearly, yet without any over-colouring. In the "scandal scene" the dresses were very handsome and appropriate, and in one or two cases the acting was extremely good, notably the Mrs. Candour of Miss Dora Day and the Crabtree of Mr. Heyrick. Miss Douglas made a striking appearance as Lady Sneerwell, and the same may be said for the Lady Teazle of Miss Lilian Ellis. The minuet was danced gracefully and in correct *tempo*. Altogether, Miss Leclercq must be complimented on the evidences afforded of her admirable training, and some among the young performers ought one day to make their mark on the stage.

For many a long year past—how many I do not care to remember, nor is it profitable to inquire, since the singer in question is gifted with perpetual youth—Mr. Ashby Sterry has been singing to us. There never was such a songster. He has sung of the Thames and its backwaters, its water lilies and mermaidens; sung of the old-fashioned gentility at Tunbridge Wells; sung of Brighton and its school-girls, its shops, and piers, and promenades; sung of old London and old world architecture; sung on board steamers, amidst the cushions of a punt, and lazily swinging in a summer hammock.

It would have been a thousand pities if the songs of the "Lazy Minstrel" had not been collected in a "dainty" edition. That is emphatically the word. No daintier little book of verse than Mr. Sterry's "Lazy Minstrel," got up in blue and gold edges and hand-made paper and rivulets of margin, has recently been sent from the press. Sir Benjamin Backbite would have raved about it to the society assembled in the "School for Scandal." Mr. Fisher Unwin is very much to be congratulated. But Mr. Ashby Sterry has made many of us dreadfully jealous. I, too, have written a few verses in my time, and they are scattered about heaven knows where. I thought I would make a desperate effort and collect them, in order to give to my friends as a pretty Christmas present. But publishers, one and all, laughed me to scorn. They ridiculed the notion of any more poetry books, and politely put me down. It served me right for being so presumptuous, and so I suppose the proposed book of poems must await that indefinite time "when the ship comes home."

The benefit of the St. Vincent Hurricane Fund, which took place on November 17, at the Novelty Theatre, under the patronage of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Hon. Mrs. Stanhope, was the occasion selected by Mr. Richard Davey for the production of his new play, "Paul and Virginia." This had both its advantages and disadvantages. Mr. Davey had thus secured a select audience, one appreciative of all the poetry and refinement in the author's work; but, on the other hand, a company made up in great part of amateurs or novices hardly showed him at his best. Mr. Davey has followed closely the plot of Bernardin de St. Pierre's book, the innovations being but few, one, for instance, being the introduction of the old man, who in the original relates the story under the name of the author. Who has not read "Paul et Virginie"? It would be a work of supererogation to go into the details of the plot beyond what is needful to show the few departures of the dramatic author. Mdme. de Latour is presented to us as being in better circumstances than in the novel, for here she is the owner of a few slaves—free slaves, be it said. This rather lessens our interest in her, making her appear more worldly when at first she contemplates accepting her aunt's offer to make Virginia her heir. Still, the necessity of introducing more *dramatis personæ* for stage effects warrants this. The Marquis de Beauregard, kinsman of Mdme. de Latour, is introduced in the Isle of France as the owner of the slave woman saved by Virginia, and is then already in league with the Princesse de Bouillon to become Virginia's husband. It is he who incites the Governor of the Isle to enforce the young girl's departure for Paris, where he follows her in good time. The one act of the play which takes place here is taken up by the Princess's endeavours to force Virginia into this hateful marriage, and her ends are defeated by the arrival of Bernardin

de St. Pierre, to whom a revengeful valet discloses the proof that Beauregard was one of the chief promoters of an attempt to assassinate the king. These proofs are sent to the Duke de Richelieu, Beauregard is sent to the Bastille, and Virginia, disowned by her aunt, returns to the Isle of France. The cruel waves cast her dead at Paul's feet, and he is supposed to die of a broken heart.

As presented on the stage, the story runs very smoothly, but undoubtedly wants compression. This idyll, with all its charm, is greatly devoid of action. This, of course, is not Mr. Davey's fault; but the question remains—Is it wise to dramatise a subject which has little dramatic interest? The touching story must appeal to a certain portion of an audience, but will the general public be content with an acted poem? As it stands, I fear not. Still, if Mr. Davey has the courage to use the pruning knife—to cut out such scenes, for instance, as the nigger song, or the merchant scene, where Virginia innocently wounds her lover's feelings by her admiration of the rich fabrics—and to strengthen the interest of the story by compression, I see no reason why his play should not be well received. I now come to the most pleasant part of my task, when mentioning the style of the dramatist. Mr. Davey's language is both poetical and refined; the words spoken by Virginia are especially descriptive of the purity and charm of innocent maidenly thought; the love scenes are most tender, and the dialogue would bear the test of reading, away from the influence of the stage. As a whole, the acting dragged, and there were one or two little mishaps incidental to first nights and a scratch company. In his speech at the close of the performance, Mr. Davey said he had to thank Miss Grace Hawthorne for coming to his rescue in a moment of trouble and creating the part of Virginia at scarcely a week's notice. Miss Hawthorne was so thoroughly at home in her part that one can fairly pronounce on the merits of her impersonation without bringing this into consideration. In the fourth act she lacked power, and her exclamation of disgust when about to sign the contract was not happy; otherwise, she was excellent.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from October 25 to November 24, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

London:

Oct. 25 "Courage," drama, in four acts, by Henry Gascoigne. Marylebone Theatre.

" 27 "Noah's Ark," comedy, in three acts, by Harry Paulton, Royalty Theatre. (Matinée, single performance.)

" 28 "Our Diva," comic opera, by Paul Ferrier and Fabrice Carré, the English version by C. M. Rae, music by Victor Roger. Opera Comique Theatre.

" " "A Dark Secret; or, A Tale of the Thames Valley," melodrama, in prologue and four acts, by James Willing, jun., and John Douglass. Standard Theatre.

Nov. 1 "Rhoda," comic opera, in three acts, by Walter Parke, composed by Antonio L. Mora. Grand Theatre. (First produced at the Theatre Royal, Croydon.)

" " "Ferdinando," farce, by Walter Parke. Grand Theatre.

" 3 "Hidden Worth," drama, in prologue and three acts, by Horace Sedger. Prince of Wales's Theatre. (Matinée, single performance.)

" 6 "Belling the Cat," comedietta, by Martin Becher, St. George's Hall.

" 10 "A Scotch Mist," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Edwin Shepherd. Vaudeville Theatre. (Matinée, single performance.)

" 13 "The Forger," original drama, in four acts, by George Roberts. Elephant and Castle Theatre.

" 15 "Tempest Tossed," drama, in four acts, by Edward Darbey. Marylebone Theatre.

" 16 "A Woman Outwitted," drama, in three acts, by Edwin Drew and D. M. Henry. Novelty Theatre.

" 17 "Clarice; or, Only a Woman," drama, in a prologue and four acts, by Walter Browne and Frank Roberts. Strand Theatre. (Matinée, single performance.)

" " "Coercion," farcical comedy, in three acts, by W. H. Denny and Thomas Burnside. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée, single performance).

" " "Paul and Virginia," drama, in five acts, founded, by Richard Davey, on Bernardin St. Pierre's novel. Novelty Theatre.

" 18 "The Secret of a Life," drama, in four acts, by Arthur Williams and George Roberts. Grand Theatre. (Matinée, single performance.)

" 24 "The House Boat," comedietta, by H. W. Williamson. Prince of Wales's Theatre.

PROVINCES:

" 1 "Passion's Slave, melodrama, by John A. Stevens. Theatre Royal, Bradford.

" 11 "The Vicar," original play, in four acts, by Joseph Hatton, founded on his novel, "The Queen of Bohemia," Theatre Royal, Sunderland.

" 12 "My Boy," domestic comedy, in three acts, by Gosp. Lubimoff. Theatre Royal, Bournemouth.

" 15 "Shoulder to Shoulder," Irish drama, in four acts, by J. W. Whitbread. Queen's Theatre, Dublin.

" 19 "Hope's Answer," comedietta, by Morris Edwards and Herbert Gough. Theatre Royal, South Shields.

" 22 "Clear Ahead," drama, by C. A. Clarke. Theatre Royal, Stratford.

PARIS.

Oct. 22* "Der Freyschutz," opera, in three acts, by Weber. Opéra.

" 25* "La Fille du Régiment," comic opera, in two acts, by Donizetti. Opéra Comiqué.

" 26* "La Femme à Papa," comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Alfred Hennequin and Albert Millaud. Variétés.

" "* "Les Diables Roses," comedy-vaudeville, in five acts, by MM. Eugène Grangé and Lambert Thiboust. Cluny.

Oct. 27 "Monsieur Scapin," comedy, in three acts, in verse, by M. Jean Richepin. Comédie Française.

" "* "Les Honnêtes Femmes," comedy, in one act, by M. Henri Becque. Comédie Française.

" 28 "Viviane," ballet-féerie, in five acts and nine tableaux, by M. Edmond Gondinet; music by MM. Raoul Pugno and Clément Lippacher. Eden.

" 29 "Jacques Bonhomme." drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by M. M. A. Maujan. Théâtre de Paris.

" 30* "L'Arlésienne," drama, in five acts, by M. Alphonse Daudet, music by Bizet. Odéon.

" " "La Cigale et la Fourmi," comic opera, in three acts and ten tableaux, by MM. Chivot and Duru, music by M. Edmond Audran. Gaité.

" " "Amour et Patrie," drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by M. Laurencin. Bouffes-du-Nord.

" 31 "Pieux Mensonges," comedy, in one act, by M. Julien Berr de Turique. Gymnase.

Nov. 4* "Le Songe d'une Nuit d'Été," comic opera, by M. Ambroise Thomas. Opéra Comique.

" 9 "Le Conseil Judiciaire," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Jules Moinaux and Alexandre Bisson. Vaudeville.

" 11* "Nos Domestiques," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Raymond Deslandes and Grangé. Menus-Plaisirs.

" 12 "Le Fils de Porthos," drama, in five acts, and fourteen tableaux, adapted from Paul Mahalin's novel by M. Emile Blavet. Ambigu.

" 13* "Gavaut, Minard, et Compagnie," comedy, in three acts, by M. Edmond Gondinet. Renaissance.

" 15* "Le Panache," comedy, in three acts, by M. Edmond Gondinet. Gymnase.

" 17 "La Femme Juge et Partie, comic opera, in two acts, words by M. Jules Adenis, music by M. Missa. Opéra Comique.

" " "Le Signal," comic opera, in one act, words by MM. Ernest Dubreuil and William Busnach; music by M. Paul Puget. Opéra Comique.

" 18 "Renée Mauperin," comedy, in three acts, in prose, adapted from the novel of MM. Edmond and Jules de Goncourt by M. Henri Céard. Odéon.

" " "Maître Corbeau, comedy, in two acts, in prose, by MM. Hippolyte Raymond and Maurice Ordonneau. Odéon.

" 19 "Le Père Chasselas," drama, in five acts, by MM. Jean Athis and Louis Pericaud. Château d'Eau.

" 20* "La Tour du Monde en 80 Jours," comedy, in five acts and fifteen tableaux, by MM. Adolphe d'Ennery and Jules Verne. Châtelet.

" "* "La Belle Hélène," comic opera, words by MM. Meilhac and Halévy, music by Offenbach. Variétés.

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